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Handwritten: *q* *cc* *and are a*
that for

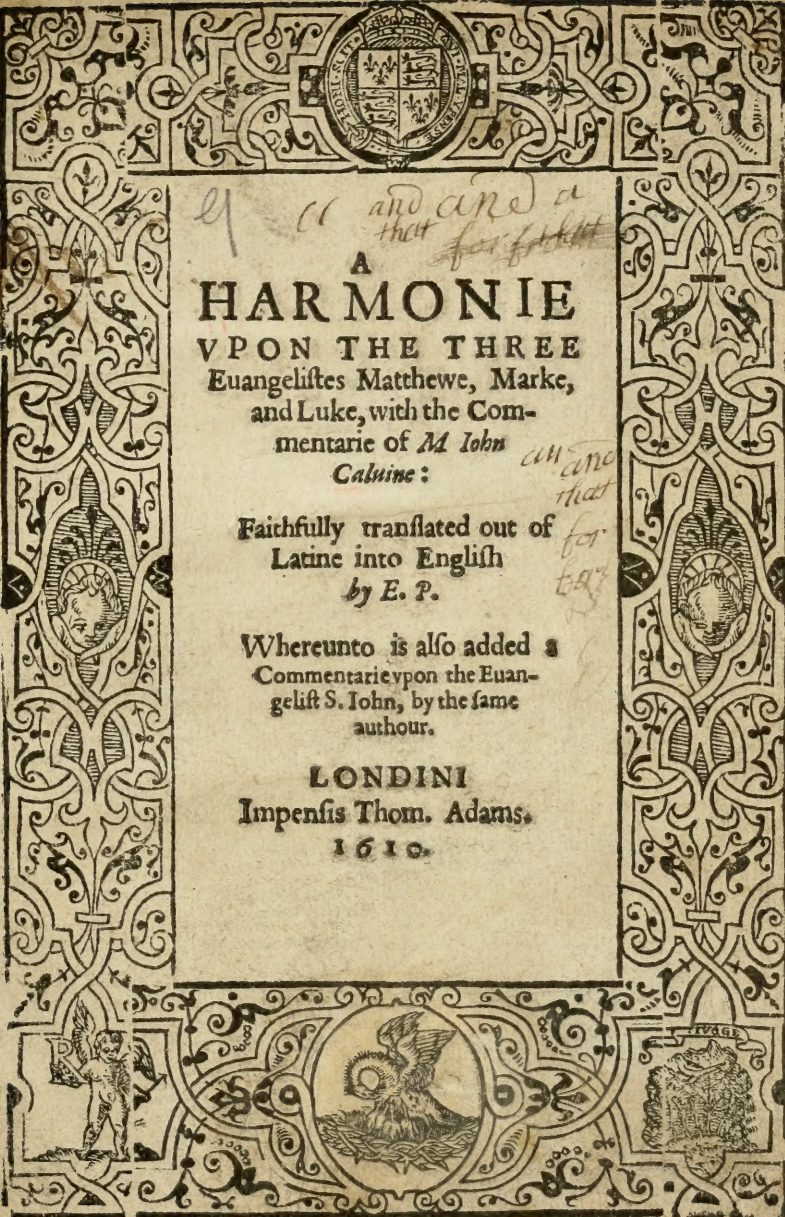
A
HARMONIE
VPON THE THREE
Euangelistes Mattheue, Marke,
and Luke, with the Com-
mentarie of *M* Iohn
Caluine:

Handwritten: *an* *and*
that *for*
1547

Faichfully translated out of
Latine into English
by E. P.

Whereunto is also added a
Commentarie vpon the Euan-
gelist S. Iohn, by the same
authour.

LONDINI
Impensis Thom. Adams.
1610.



Scott & Bland & Co

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TO THE RENOWMED PIERES

and noble Lordes, the Consuls, and the

whole senate of the famous Cittie of Frankeford.

I. Caluine.



Feuer it seemed expedient that the pageants of vertues should bee shewed openly to the imitation of others (which might bee a spurre as well to the lasie lingerers, as to the rettie runners): surely the slouthfull dealing and sluggish behauiour which is vsed in these our corrupt daies maketh it seeme necessarie: that the greater parte of men which rather start backe, then willingly step forward, should be constrained at the least with shame of negligence to doe

their dutie. For we see every man busilie bent to a certaine contention who shal excell in wicked practises, and that both in priuate and publike affaires: that no Monarch doth seem to be inferiour to the nations that border vpon him either in policie, or vigilancie, or power, or bold attempt, whereby hee may enlarge the boundes of his empire: that no citie or common weale doeth giue place to any in craftinesse and all captious dealing: that no man is the second in subtilerie among the proud and ambitious: finally there is no man which hath not conspired with his company, and that in the way of contention, slyly to incite the rest as it were with a becke to all vitious vanitie, and hee that is ringleader in all naughtines soone sturth vp other to his lewdnes, whereas in the rankest route of ribalds is scarce one found out that fauoureth honestie: which maketh me thinke it very profitable that such rare vertues as sometime raigne in noble personages, should be aduanced to the lostie theater or stage of due commendation, to the intent that they being spied a far of might allure the greater number to like them and liue accordingly. And this I confesse (right honourable) was the cheifest cause that moued me to publish this my labour abroad, vnder the title of your names. For although I shall perswade my selfe to haue profited very well, if any that begin of their owne accord to creepe forward, shalbe encouraged by mee to runne faster: yet did not I so muche respect this, as that I might perswade other to ioyne hands with you, or at the least to tread the same path that you doe. Notwithstanding I haue not purposed to recite as out of a rolle all the godly qualitties wherewith you are thoroughly furnished. only it shal suffice at this time to set forth y^e one vertue wherewith you haue bound to your honours as with a more holy bond, as well mee, as diuers other faithfull seruants of Iesus Christe. This one thing is woorthy highly to bee prayed that siue yeeres when as an horrible feare hadde affrighted the mindes of all men in euery place: when as the ouerthrowe that our enemies hadde giuen vs did threaten a miserable ruine to the Churches throughout Germany and almost an vtter extinguishing of the Gospell, you even at that time being placed in the fore front of the battaile stode stoutly to the free confession of your faith, which was hated to death, and retayned with all con-

THE EPISTLE.

Auncle that sincere doctrine of pietie which before you receiued: which is a
 manifest argument that when you were tossed with greuous cares and dange-
 rous turmoyles, you desired nothing more then to fight manfully vnder Christs
 banner. But that which followeth will surely make your names immortall. & you
 doe not only set out amongst your selues the true worship of God and imploy
 your faithfull labour, to containe your citizens within the sheepfold of Christ:
 but also gather together the dispersed reliques of his church, thrust out of nations
 which are as it were members of the same alrent and pulled in peeces. Doubtles
 it did greatly reioyce my heart (considering the troublesom time) to heare that
 the true worshippers of God, which fled in exile from England & other coun-
 tries, were gently receiued and entertained among you and that you did not
 onely releue and ease their heauie banishment but that you had also a due con-
 sideration of the glory of the sonne of God, in so much that you made his Gos-
 pel to be founded in your citie, euen by the tongues of aliants, and that in a
 straunge language. The like curtesie was shewed of late by the Magistrates of
 Tigurine to the afflicted citizens of Lo. whom they did not onely receiue and
 foster within the walles of their Citie when at home they could not worship
 God as they woulde: but also erected a Temple for them wherein they might
 celebrate Gods holy seruice: neither were they diswaded by the diuersitie of
 tongues from suffering Christ to speake Italian euen in the midst of Tigurine
 but I let them passe to come againe to that I was about to say of you. As soone
 as I vnderstoode that your curtesie stretched so farre as to suffer my countremen
 to haue a holy congregation in your citie perceiuing my selfe bound vnto you
 by a priuate benefite: I thought good to testifie my thankfull hart by this gift
 which now I present vnto you. For as the condition of our countrie men is
 rightly to be lamented, who dwelling in their natiue soyle, seeme by the tyran-
 nous sacriledge of the Pope to be cleane banished from Christes kingdome:
 so on the contrary parte, it is not a little to bee reioyced at that they haue
 a resting place granted them in a strang countrie, where they may render due
 honour vnto the liuing God. And surely this holy hospitalitie which you haue
 vsed, not so much towards men as to Christ him selfe, shall be a meane as I
 trust, to moue God to power his rare benefites vpon you, and stil to continue
 his liberalitie towards you which do already flourish in all prosperitie. Doubt-
 lesse it constrained mee (as I signified before) to dedicate this my booke vnto
 you, which is a Commentarie vpon the Harmonie made of three Euangelists:
 in making where of I haue taken some paines which no lesse fidelitie then in-
 dustry. But as it is to small purpose to declare how seriously I haue trauiled here
 in: so do I submit my selfe to other mens iudgements, for the learned, wise, and
 discrete Readers, who as they take great delight in the comon vilitie, so they
 be not athamed like rude and barbarous caytifes, to learne and augment their
 knowlede by reading and studie. But as for peruers and ouerthwart wranglers,
 I little esteeme, I meane not cowed Monkes, who for the maintenance of the
 Popes tyranny fight in open place against vs: but also those vnaturall drones
 which being mingled among vs, desire nothing more, then cleane to extinguish
 all light of learning, to this intent that they may cloake and couer their owne
 ignorance. For although like dogs they despitefully barke at me, yet will I vse
this

this exception alwaies, that I need not submit my selfe to their censure or iudgement, eyther by the law of God or of men, which are not onely to be kept vnderlike children for their blamefull and infamous vnskilfulnes: but also most seuerely to be punished for their malicious obstinacie, and too stubborne impudencie. But what soeuer they say, I trust the better fortwill graunt, that it is lawfull for me to acknowledge without arrogancie, that faithful labour, which I haue employed to the profit of Gods Church. There came forth two yeeres since the Gospell of Iohn, with my interpretation, which I trust hath not been fruitelesse. And thus like an apparitor, I haue endeouored to my power, to set forth Christ riding princelike in his foure wheeled chariot, very gloriously: By reading of which worke, when the gentle readers haue profited themselves, they will not loath to confesse, that they haue not studied it in vaine: which Euangelicall history being described and set forth by foure witnesses, appointed by God himselfe, I doe not without cause compare vnto a chariot, for of this sweete and pleasant consent God seemeth purposely to haue made as it were, a triumphant chariot for his sonne, out of which he might plainly appeare to be scene of all his faithfull people, & by the swiftnes whereof he might lightly passe and as it were range ouer the whole world. Neither doth Augustine vnfitly compare the foure Euangelistes to trumpets, the noyse whereof doth sound in all coasts, that the Church of Christe being summoned out of the foure quarters of the world, might flocke and gather together from the East and the Weste, from the South and the North, vnto an holy consent of faith. Wherefore their absurd curiositie is the lesse to be borne with al who being not content with these Gospels (which be as it were proclamations proceeding from heauen) thrust out their owne toyces, and corrupt imaginations, which do nothing but defile the puritie of faith, and cause Christes name to be scorned and had in derision of the vngodly. As for you, which doe farre excel the common sorte, since you detest in minde all that corrupt leuen, wherewith the true sinceritie of the Gospell is infected, and shewe your selues to delight in nothing more then in maintaining and allowng the plaine and simple doctrin, as it is set forth by Christ himselfe: I am not onely perswaded that you will very well like of this my watchful worke, which expoundeth the treasure of glad tidings: but also I haue a good hope, that this signe or token of my good will and loue to you ward, will be aswell acceptable, in that I haue dedicated the same vnto you. Thus I bid you farewell, right honorable Lordes, and wishe that Christ may direct you with his holy spirit strengthen you with his power preferue you vnder his protection and enrich your Citie and common weale with his plenteous benediction. At *Gemma*, the first of Aug. The yeere of our Lordes natiuitie,

A Table shewing the Chapter, Verse and Fol. of all the
principall matters contained in this Harmonie. The first number
sheweth the Chapter, the second, the Verse, the third
the fol.

Matthew.	Ca. Ver.	Fol.	Ca. Ver.	Fol.	Ca. Ver.	Fol.
Ca. Verse. Fol.	14	ibid	25	173	6	ib.
1. 57	16	123	27	175	7	113
2 ibidem.	17	124	28	ib.	9	114
3 58	1	125	29	ib.	11	ib.
6 ibid.	3	128	31	176	13	216
12 59	4	129	32	177	15	220
16 ib.	5	131	33	ib.	16	ibid
18 60	6	ibi.	34	178	21	222
19 ibid.	7	132	37	179	22	223
21 61	8	ib.	38	180	23	ibid
22 63	10	133	39	ibid	24	224
23 66	11	134	40	181	28	225
24 67	12	135	42	182		
25 68	13	143	43	184	8. 1	226
	18	145	44	ibid	2	ibid
2. 1 79	22	148	45	185	3	ibid
2 80	23	ibid	46	186	4	227
3 81	33	105	48	ib.	5	229
4 ib.			6. 1	186	8	230
6 82	5. 1	156	2	187	3	264
7 83	2	157	3	ib.	11	232
9 84	3	158	4	ibid	12	233
11 ibi.	4	ib.	5	188	13	ib.
13 95	5	ib.	7	199	17	152
15 96	6	159	8	ib.	19	235
16 97	7	ib.	9	190	20	236
18 98	8	160	10	193	21	ibid
19 99	9	ib.	11	194	22	237
23 ibid.	10	ib.	12	196		
	11	161	13	197	9. 1	239
3. 1 107	12	ib.	19	200	2	ib.
2 108	13	163	2	201	3	240
3 110	14	165	23	202	4	ib.
6 111	16	ib.	24	203	5	241
7 113	17	166	25	205	6	ib.
8 & L.S. 114	18	168	26	ib.	8	ibid
9 116	19	ib.	27	206	9	242
10 117	20	169	33	208	11	244
11 119	21	170			12	ib.
12 121	22	171	7. 1	209	13	245
23 123	23	172	3	211	14	247

Ca. Verse. Fol. Ca. Verse. Fol. Ca. Verse Fol. Ca. Verse. Fol.

15	ibid	2	ibid	43	336	23	ibid
16	248	3	292	44	337	24	429
18	249	6	293	45	ibid	27	430
20	250	7	294	48	340	28	ib.
22	251	8	ibid	38	341	31	430
27	254	11	295	38	ibid	33	ibid
29	255	12	ibid	41	342	34	432
30	ibid	14	296	42	343	36	ibid
32	ibid	15	297				
34	259	20	303	13. 2	246	15 1	433
35	ibid	21	304	9	ibid	2	435
36	ibid	23	305	10	ib	3	436
37	257	25	309	11	ib	5	437
		26	311	12	348	7	ibid
10. 1	267	27	ibid	13	349	9	438
2	268	28	313	14	ibid	10	439
5	ibid	29	314	16	351	12	ibid
6	ibid			19	353	13	ibid
7	269	12. 1	315	20	ibid	14	440
8	ibid	3	316	22	354	15	441
9	270	5	ibid	23	355	19	ibid
10	271	7	317	36	357	22	443
11	ibid	8	ibid	39	358	23	ibid
12	ibi.	9	318	41	359	24	444
14	272	10	319	43	360	25	445
15	ibid	11	ibid	34	362	26	ibid
16	274	14	321	35	ibid	27	446
17	275	16	ibid	46	365	28	ibid
19	276	17	322	47	ib	29	448
21	277	18	ibid	51	ib	32	449
22	278	19	323	53	414	33	450
23	ibid	20	324	54	ibid		
24	279	22	325	55	415	16. 1	450
25	ibid	23	ibid	57	ibid	2	451
26	281	24	326	58	ibid	5	453
28	ibid	25	227			9	454
29	282	27	ibid	14. 2	416	8	455
32	284	28	328	5	419	13	458
35	285	29	329	13	424	14	ibid
37	287	30	330	14	425	15	459
38	ibid	31	ibid	15	ibid	16	ibid
39	ibid	32	332	16	426	17	ibid
40	289	33	333	19	ibip	18	460
41	ibid	34	ibid	20	427	19	461
		36	334	22	428	23	465
		37	335				
21. 1	291						

Ca. Verse. Fol. Ca. Verse. Fol. Ca. Verse. Fol. Ca. Verse. Fol.

23	466	16	522	33	576	35	923
24	467	17	523	35	578	37	625
25	468	18	524	37	ibid	38	628
26	ibid	19	525	42	ibi.	39	629
27	ibi.	22	526	43	581	24. 1	632
28	469	23	527	44	582	2	ib.
		25	528	45	583	3	633
17. 2	471	26	ibid	12. 1	383	4	634
3	ibi.	28	530	2	ibid	5	635
4	472	29	531	4	388	6	636
5	473	30	ibi.	7	389	9	637
6	474	1	533	9	ibid	10	639
10	476	8	534	11	390	11	ibid
11	ibid	16	535	16	584	12	640
17	479	17	536	18	585	14	ibid
19	481	18	ibi.	21	ibid	15	642
21	482	21	538	22	587	16	644
22	483	22	539	23	588	21	ibid
24	507	23	540	24	589	22	645
27	508	24	541	29	590	23	646
		25	542	30	ib.	24	647
18. 1	484	26	543	38	595	25	648
2	486	18	ibid	39	596	28	649
5	486	29	545	40	598	30	651
6	487	30	546	42	600	31	652
10	488	31	ibid	43	601	34	654
12	490	32	ibid	44	602	35	655
15	496	34	547	23	1	36	ibid
16	497	2	557	3	605	37	657
17	498	5	558	4	607	39	658
18	500	6	ibi.	7	608	40	659
19	502	8	559	9	609	42	660
20	ibid	9	ibid	11	ibid	43	662
21	504	10	564	13	611	45	663
23	506	12	565	14	612	48	664
25	ibid	13	566	15	ibid		
31	ibid	24	567	16	613	25. 15	554
19. 4	513	15	568	18	614	20	ibid
5	514	16	569	23	617	24	555
6	ibid	18	ibid	24	ibid	1	667
7	515	19	570	25	ibid	2	668
9	516	21	ibid	27	618	5	ibid
12	518	23	572	29	619	8	ibid
13	520	25	ibid	30	620	9	ibid
14	521	30	574	33	622	32	671
		32	ibid	34	ibid	34	ibid

Ca.	Ver.	Fol.	Ca.	Verse.	Fol.	Ca.	Verse.	Fol.	Ca.	Verse.	Fol.
	37	673		59	ibi.		55	764	6.	15	265
	44	675		62	702		57	766	12		290
				63	ibi.		59	768	24		421
16.	3.	677		64	ibid		61	ibi.	26		422
	3.	ibid		65	721		62	769	28		ibid
	8.	678		67	722		63	ib.	29		423
	10	ib.		69	723		65	770	7.	32	441
	11	679		71	724	28.				36	449
	12	680		74	725		2	773	37		ibi.
	13	ib.		75	ibi.		4	774			
	17	682	27.	1	727		7	ibid	8.	24	457
	18	683		3	ibid		8	775	26		ibid
	20	684		4	728		9	776			
	21	685		5	729		10	777	9	14	478
	22	ib.		6	ibid		11	778		17	479
	24	686		9	ibid		15	779	20		480
	25	687		10	730		16	ibid	21		ibid
	26	688		11	731		18	797	22		ibi.
	29	692		12	733		19	ibid	46		164
	27	694		15	735		20	799	50		165
	28	ibi.		19	736			803	23		481
	31	696		20	737	Marke			42		ibi.
	31	667		22	ibi.				38		509
	32	698		24	739	1.	3	153	39		510
	33	ibid		25	ibi.		14	135			
	36	702		26	740		22	150	10.	21	526
	37	ibid		27	741		26	ibi.	52		547
	38	704		32	ibi.		29	151			
	39	ibid		33	744		44	228	11.	2	557
	40	707		34	745		45	bi.	9		559
	41	708		35	746				12.	32	599
	22	ibid		37	748	2.	24	315	34		ibid
	43	709		38	ibi.		27	317	43		630
	44	710		39	749	3.	13	154			
	46	ibid		40	ibid		13	ibi.	13.	11	638
	47	ibid		42	750		12	350			
	48	711		43	751	4.	26	362	14.	26	995
	49	ibid		44	ibi.	5.	36	253	51		717
	50	ibid		45	757		37	ibid			
	51	712		46	758		39	ibi.	15.	25	746
	52	713		47	759		41	ibid	36		760
	53	714		48	760		43	254	43		767
	54	715		50	ibi.		3	262			
	55	716		51	761		6	263	16.	1	772
	56	ibid		52	762		9	264	3		773
	57	718		54	763		10	ibi.	11		777

Ca. Verse. Fol. Ca. Verse. Fol. Ca. Verse. Fol. Ca. Verse. Fol.

	14	791	55	40	37	93	29	297
	16	805	58	41	38	94	30	298
	19	806	59	ibid	39	ibid	31	299
	2	805	60	42	40	101	33	ibid
	20	ibid	64	ibid	41	102	34	ib.
			65	ibid	44	103	35	ibid
	Luke.		67	43	46	ibid	36	367
1.	1	2	68	44	48	104	37	ibid
	2	ibid	69	ibid	49	ibid	40	368
	3	3	70	45	51	ibid	41	ibid
	5	4	71	ibid			44	ibid
	6	6	72	46	3. 12	118	47	369
	7	7	73	ibid	19	194	48	ibid
	9	8	75	47	4. 15	136	49	370
	12	ibid	76	48	16	137	50	ibid
	13	9	77	49	17	ibid	8. 3	345
	14	10	78	ib.	18	138	19	339
	15	ibid	79	50	19	139	38	265
	16	12	80	ib.	20	ibid	52	253
	17	13			21	ib	9. 60	239
	18	15 2.	1	62	22	ib	61	ibid
	20	17	7	70	23	140	51	510
	21	18	8	71	24	141	52	511
	23	ibid	9	72	25	ibid	54	ibid
	24	19	10	ib.	28	142		
	25	ibid	11	73	5. 1	145	10. 1	301
	26	21	12	ib.	5	146	2	302
	28	22	13	74	6	ibid	16	305
	29	23	14	ib.	8	147	17	307
	30	ibid	15	76	10	ibid	18	ib
	31	ibid	16	ib.	36	150	19	ib
	32	24	17	77	39	152	20	308
	33	25	19	ib.	29	243	24	351
	34	27	20	ib.	39	248	38	371
	36	29	21	78			42	372
	37	ibid	22	85	6. 1	315	26	594
	38	30	23	86	8	139	28	596
	39	31	24	ib.	13	155	29	ibid
	41	32	25	87	24	162	30	597
	43	ibid	29	88	30	181	11. 1	190
	45	33	30	ib.	35	182	5	214
	46	34	31	ib.	7. 5	230	53	630
	48	35	32	89	11	234		
	49	36	34	90	12	ib	12. 29	207
	51	37	35	92	14	ib	32	208
	54	39	36	ib.	16	235	47	665

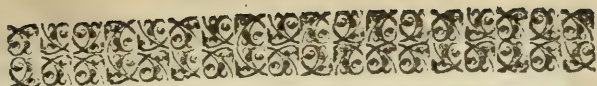
Epistle Dedicatorie.

his mercies towards vs, least he turn his correcting rod which he hath so ofte shaken ouer vs, into a deuouring, sword to consume vs. Of my selfe I will say nothing, the mouthes of the wicked cannot be stopt, their false tongues I hope shall teach me to Walke warilie, and I haue learned, I thanke my God, to passe through good repute & through euill and to commit my selfe and my cause to him that iudgeth right. The Lord of Lords preferue your honour in safetie, & multiply all spirituall blessings vpon you & yours. From Kiltchampton in Cornewall, this 28, of Ian. 1584.

*The Lords most vnworthie
minister, Iame Enschrius Pages.*







TO THE RIGHT HO-
norable Fraunces Earle of Bedford,
of the noble order of the Garter Knight, one of the
Lords of her Maiesties most honorable priue Counsell grace
and peace from God, with the encrease of that true honour,
which is from God and lasteth for euer.



He choice (right honorable) whiche Luke the Euangelist made, in dedicating this historie of the gospell, which hee wrote to that noble man Theophilus, and which that man of worthe memory M. Iohn Caluine tooke in dedicating these his labours to the Lords of *Frankesford*, driueth meeto dedicate this my small labour of translating this booke into the English tongue, and though it is but little that I haue done in comparison of the labors of the other two, and not woorth the offering to men of great estate: yet least that I should seeme singular in dissenting from these two singular instruments in the Church of God, and that in one and the selfe same booke, I haue presumed to make bolde of your Lordships name, hoping that your H. will not mislike to haue it written in the forehead of this booke with noble Theophilus and the Lords of *Frankesford*, specially sith that I doe it in testimonie of my dutifull loue to you, for the manifold grace of GOD in you, and benefites which I haue receiued from you. Men doe commonly in their Epistles write, either in the commendati-
on

The translators

on of the worke or in the prayse of their patrone, or in discharging of themselves of the discredite which their enemies woulde lay vpon them: but I craue pardon of your honour if in studying to bee short, I omit these thinges. For first the verye name of the gospel of Iesu Christe, and then the names of Matthewe, Marke, and Luke the Euangelists, & of M. Caluine the gatherer of the Harmonie & the writer of the Commentarie, do yeeld more credite and commendation to the matter, then all that I can say of it all the dayes of my life. Only this I say of M. Caluines labours here that in my simple iudgement it is one of the profitablest workes for the church that euer he did write, Next for your praises, as you like not to heare them, so I will not offend you in setting them down nor giue other occasion to condemne me of flatterie. They which haue best knowen you, say, that you began a good course in your youth that you witnessed a good confession in the late time of persecution, that your constancie hath beene testified by your troubles at home, and trauels in forraine countries you haue continued your profession in the midst of your dignitie, Lordships, and liuing left by your parents and in the seat of gouernment, wherein our Soueraigne and most gracious Queene hath placed you, not falling asleepe in securitie in this so peacable a time. My good L. continue to the ende, so shall you bee safe. I speake not this as if it were your owne strength that hath holden you vp al this while, but meditate somtimes, I pray you vpon the 71. Psalmie, and pray that Lord as Dauid did, who kept you in your youth that he wil keepe you in your old age, now that your head is hoare and hayres gray. And I beseech the mighty Lord to thrust them forward which are drawn back by their youthly affections & to raise vp them that fell away for feare of troubles & to waken those which in this quiet and calme time do sleepe in securitie, or waxe wanton with the wealth of the worlde, that we may meete the Lorde with true humilitie and earnest repentaunce, to see if hee will bee intreated to continue
his

Ca.	Verse.	Fol.	Ca.	Verse.	Fol.	Ca.	Verse	Fol.	Ca.	Verse.	Fol.
	48	ibid	20	ibid		7	549	39	752		
	49	ibi.	21	494		8	ibi.	40	ibid		
	50	666	22	ibid		9	550	41	753		
	51	285	28	495		11	552	42	ib.		
	13	373	31	496		12	ibid	43	754		
	15	374				13	553	51	767		
	16	ibid	16	296		27	555				
	17	ibi.	8	392		41	560	24.	12	778	
	20	375	9	393		42	561		13	781	
	21	ibi.	10	394		43	562		14	ibid	
	57	452	12	ibi.		47	570		16	ibid	
			14	395					17	782	
			15	ibi.	20.	37	590		19	ibid	
13.	24	117	21	397		38	591		21	783	
	25	218	22	ibi.		39	592		25	ibid	
	26	ibid	23	399					26	784	
	28	ibid	25	400	21.	19	639		27	ibid	
	22	363	26	ibid		28	652		28	785	
	2	376	27	401					30	786	
	6	377	30	402	22.	28	530		31	787	
	11	378				29	ibid		32	ibid	
	14	379	10	404		19	693		33	788	
	15	ibid	13	411		31.	696		34	ibid	
	32	380	14	ibid		36	700		36	789	
14.	28	288	15	412		37	ibid		37	790	
	33	289	19	ibid		51	715		38	ibid	
	3	383	20	413					39	ibid	
	5	384			23.	10	733		41	792	
	7	ibid				11	734		44	793	
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15.	10	490	18	524		29	743		49	ibid	
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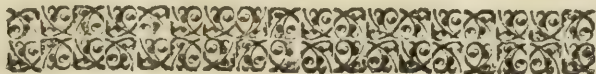
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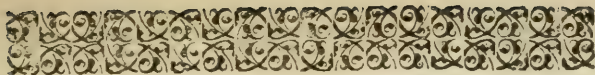
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but when they all determined truely and faithfully to set forth those things which they had thorowly knowne and approued, euery one of them followed what order hee thought best himselfe. And like as this came to passe, not by blinde chance & fortune, but by the diuine providence of God: euen so the holy Ghost ministred vnto them a marueilous consent, vnder a contrary stile & forme of wryting. The which Harmony it selfe, were sufficient to confirme their credits, had they not else where receiued greater & more stedfast authoritie. Now as for Luke he credibly witnesseth of himselfe, that hee was a companion of Paule continually conuersant with him. But that which Eusebius reporteth, is very childish, & Paule was the true author of Lukes Gospell, because in a certaine place he maketh mention of his owne Gospell. As though it were not manifest by that which ensueth in the text that Paule speaketh of his common preaching and not of any one booke wrytten. For he sayeth: For the which Gospell I suffer affliction as an euill doer, euen vnto bonds. And who knoweth not that Paule was accused not for any Booke he had compiled, but for that hee was a Minister of the woorde and preached openly the Gospell of Christ: whereby it appeareth that Eusebius was a man very painful but of smal iudgment since without diligent heed he heapeth vp together so many senceles notes wherof I thought good to admonish the readers lest they chance to stumble at such like blockes, which lie heere and there scattered throughout all his workes. Moreouer, because I haue chosen a kinde of interpretation, which may perhaps displease diuers at the first blush, I meane to yeeld a reason of my doing trusting thereby to satisfie the vnpartial and godly readers. This first is without contrariety, that none of the three Euangelists, can be truely & rightly interpreted, vnlesse he be conferred with the two other. Wherefore faithful and skilfull Interpreters, herein take much paines, that all things may be reconciled which are spoken by the three Euangelists. But since that meane wities cannot easily conserre the Euangelists together, whilest still they turne and returne from the one place to the other I thought this brieue Methode would seeme pleasant & profitable, if by a continuall processe or discourses like as it were in one table the three histories were ioyned together: wherein the readers may see and discern at once what is dissonant and agreeable to them all. So I will ouerslip nothing which is wrytten by any one of the three: and I will declare in one discourse what soeuer is handled by diuers. Now, whether my paines be well bestowed (as I hope) or no, let euery manne iudge according to the profite he taketh in reading. Truly it was so farre from my thought to catch after praise and commendation by my newe inuention that I freely confesse (as be cometh euery good nature) that in this manner of interpretation I haue imitated other. And I most of all men followed Bucer, a man of holy memorie and a famous teacher in the church of God, who (in my iudgment) hath traueled heerein to no smal purpose. And like as he hath had great furtherance by the diligence of ancient wryters, which haue taken paines in the same studie before him: so I professe my selfe to haue bene as much eased by his labour and industrie. But where as I differ from him in some place (the which liberty I graunted my selfe ofte as seemed necessary,) I thinke that he himselfe, if he now liued on earth would not be offended with it.

2. Tim. 2. 8.







The argument of the Gospell of Iesus Christ,
according as it is sette forth by MATHEWE,
MARKE, and LVKE,

THAT we may read this Euangelicall hystorie to our profite and commoditie, is shall not be little available to vnderstand the sence of this word EVANGELIVM, which we call in English the GOSPEL: for thereby we shall easily discerne what mooued these heavenly witnesses to commit these things to wryting, and to what ende all things that they haue wrytten, are to be referred. For these hystories were not so named by other men, but that the authours themselves did so intitle them it is manifest by Marke: which sayeth in plaine wordes that he declareth the beginning of the Gospell of Iesus Christ, Moreover the prefecte and plaine definition of H Gospell is gathered specially out of a certain place in Paule, where he saith that it was promised of GOD in the scriptures by the Prophets as concerning his son which was borne of the seede of Dauid, and declared mightely to be the sonne of God through the spirit of sanctification by the rising againe of H deade. First he sheweth that it is a testimonie of saluation offered which was promised long agoe to the fathers by continuall successe of ages, wherein doeth appeare a plaine difference betweene those promises which did hold in doubt the mindes of the faithfull, and those glad tidings whereby God witnesseth that he hath now thoroughly performed all things which before he would haue them to hope for. Like as a little after the same Paule sayeth that the iustice of God is sette forth in the same Gospell which before was signified by the lawe and the Prophets. And therefore in an other place, the Apostle calleth it an ambassage wherein is daily declared vnto men a reconciliation which is once for all concluded betweene God and the world, by the death of Christ. He signifieth also that Christ is not onely a pledge of all good things that were graunted vnto vs by God, but also that in him they are fully and wholly offred vnto vs, according as he sayeth else where, that al the promises of God are fulfilled in Christ euen so be it Amen. And doubtlesse that free adoption whereby we are made the children of God as it proceedeth from the ever lasting good will of the father so it is opened vnto vs in that that Christ (who is the onely natural son of God) taketh our flesh vpon him did chuse vs to be his brethen. Neither ought we to seeke any where else, but only in the sacrifice of his death expiation or blessing where with our sinnes are blotted out: so that the crosse or sentence of death cannot fall vpon vs. Righteousnesse, saluation and perfect felicity haue a sure foundation in his resurrection. Wherefore H Gospell may be defined to be a solemne publishinge or proclamation, where in the son of God is declared to haue beene offred vppon the flesh to the intent that hee might renew the wicked world and restore men that were dead, to life. Neither is it without cause called good & glad tidings since in it is comprehended H summe of our felicity: for the end thereof is that is, hauing begun in vs the kingdome of God and hauing abolished the corruption of our flesh might bring vs being renewed through the spirit vnto the celestial & heavenly glory. In which sence it is oft times called the kingdome of heauen, and a reparation of a blissefull life, atchiued by Christ & sometimes it is called the king-
(.)

Rom. 1.2.

2. Cor. 5.20.

Mar. 1. 9345
dom

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Lu. 16. 16.

dom of God. As when Marke sayeth that Ioseph looked for the kingdome of God, doubtlesse it is to be vnderstande of the comminge of Messias: whereby it is manifest that the name of the Gospel doth properly pertaine to the New Testament: and that those wryters speake very confusely, which thinke it to be like common to all ages, and that the prophets may as aptly be called ministers of the Gospel, as the Apostles. Christs wordes sound farre other wise who making mention that the law and the Prophets were of force till the comminge of Iohn, declareth that then *the* Kingdome of God began to be preached. And Marke (as before was mentioned) signifieth that the Gospel did beginne with the preachinge of Iohn: but this name and title was not without good aduisement giuen to these 4 histories, wherein is declared, *the* Christ tooke vpon him *the* office & function of a mediator. For since in the birth death and resurrection of Christ is comprised the sum of our saluation, & they are the very matter wherof it doeth consist, they may very well & fitly be called Euangelists: that is to say, bringers of merrye newes, whiche portraite out before our eyes Christ sent of his father, so that by faith we may acknowledge him to be the only author of our felicitie. The force and effecte of his comming is more plainly put downe in other bookes of the New Testament. And Iohn in this respect differeth farre from the other three who is wholly occupied in expressing the vertue of Christ, and the fruite that we reape thereby where as the rest stand more vpon this poynt that our Christ is the sonne of God which was promised to be the redemer of the world. In dede they doe teache heere and there the doctrine of Christs office, that we may be certified of his sumour towards vs, and to what ende he was giuen vnto vs: but this (as I sayde) is the cheefest matter they handle, that Christ Iesus did fully finish all thinges in his owne person whatsoeuer was promised by God euer since the beginning of the world. For their purpose and intent was not by their wrytings to abolish & destroy the lawe & *the* Prophets as diuers brainesicke persons doe vainely dreame, that the Old Testament hath beene to none effecte euer since *the* veritie of the heavenly wisdom hath beene revealed vnto vs: by Christ and his Apostles. Nay they rather pointing out Christ vnto vs as it were with a finger put vs in minde to seeke at his handes what soeuer the lawe and the Prophets haue ascribed vnto him. Wherefore then weeshall fruitefully and effectually read the Gospell when we shall learne to conferre it with the promises of the olde Testament. As concerning the three Euangelists which nowe I take in hand to interpret. Mathewe is sufficiently knowne, and some thinke Marke to haue liued frimiliarily with Peter as his scholler: and to haue received the Gospell which he wrote word by word out of Peters mouth: so that he supplied onely the rounme of the Scribe or Notarie. But this matter needeth no curious disputation for it little appertaineth vnto vs to knowe more, then that he is a lawfull witnesse ordained of God and that he publisheth nothing in wryting, but that which was revealed vnto him & putte into his hand by the holy Ghost. But Ieromes opinion seemeth to haue smal grounde, who thinketh his Gospell to be a brieft summe, drawne out of the Gospell of Mathewe. For he differeth from him in handling his matter euen in the entrance: neither doth he obserue the same Methode that Mathewe doeth, & he reckoneth vppon diuers thinges lesse vntouched of the other and some thinges mentioned in Mathewe, he declareth more at large. I thinke it more probable, and so may I gather by the woorkes it selfe, that he had neuer seene Mathewes booke when he wrote his owne, much lesse did he of purpose make an Epitome or Abridgement of it. And the very same doe I iudge of Luke. For, as concerning the clauses wherein they seeme to differ, I thinke not that they brought them in of sette purpose, but

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Heere endeth the Table of the Harmonie.

A Harmonie composed and made
of thee Euangelistes, Matthew, Marke and Luke,
with the Commentaries of John Caluine.

Matthew

Marke.

Luke 1.

I *As much as many have taken in hande : to set forth the storie of those thinges, whereof wee are fully perswaded.*

2. *As they haue deliuered them vnto vs, which from the beginning sawe them their selues and were Ministers of the word.*

3. *It seemed good also to mee (most noble Theophilus) as soone as I had searched out perfectly all thinges from the beginning, to write vnto thee thereof from point to point.*

4. *That thou mightest acknowledge the certaintie of those thinges, whereof thou hast bene instructed.*

ONely Luke doth make a preface to his Gospell, that breifly he may shew the cause whereby he was moued to write. That he speaketh to one man, it seemeth to bee absurd : when that rather it was his dutie by open sounde of trumpet to call all men together to the faith, Therefore it seemeth not to bee conuenient, that hee shoulde dedicate to his Theophilus onely that doctrine which is not proper to one or other, but common for all. Hereof it came to passe, that diuers thought it to be a name appellatiue, and all godly men to be called Theophilus, of louing God : but the Epitheton that is ioyned with it differeth from that opinion. Neyther yet is that absurditie to be feared, which constrayned them to seeke such refuge. Neyther doth the doctrine of Paule lesse belong to all men, because that of his Epistles, he directed some to certain Cities, and some to certaine men. And truly if wee considered the estate of their times, we should confesse that Luke heerein did godly and wisely. There were tyrants ready on euery side, which with feare and terrors woulde hinder the course of wholesome doctrine. This gaue an occasion or libertie to Satan and his ministers, to scatter cloudes of errors, which might dimme the pure light. And because that in keeping the puritie of the Gospell, the common sorte were little carefull, and fewe did diligently consider what Satan would deuise, and howe much danger lay hidde in such decoies. Therefore as euerie one did excell other with rare fayth and singular giftes of the holy Ghost, so with greater studie and diligencce hee ought to apply himselfe, that hee might as much as in him lyeth preserue the doctrine of godlines pure and free from all corruption. Such (as holy layers vpp of bookes, wherein lawes are written) were chosen of GOD, faithfully to deliuer

A

deliuer to their posteritie the heauenly doctrine committed to them. Wherefore Luke doth dedicate his Gospell to Theophilus, that hee should faithfully keepe the same, which things Paul also doth enioyne and charge his Timothy with 2. Ep. 1. 14. & cap. 3. 14.

1. *For as much as many.* He seemeth to alleadge that, as a cause of his writing, which rather should haue withdrawne him from writing. For it were but a needlesse labour, to writhe againe a historie already entreated of by many, if they had done their dutie. Neither doth he charge them with any word, eyther of deceite, or of negligence, or of any other fault: Therefore it is as much as if he should say, he would doe a thing already done. I answer, although he spareth them that had written before, yet doth he not thoroughly allow the labours of all of them. Hee doth not plainely say, that they haue written of things slenderly proued: but challenging the certain knowledge of these things vnto himselfe, modestly doth disable some of them of certaine and vndoubted knowledge. If any doe object, that if they had erred, hee should haue sharply inuicied against them: I answer againe, it may be, that they did a little offend and that of an vnaduised zeale, rather then of malice: and therefore, that there was no cause why he should more vehemently haue enforced himselfe against them. And it is credible, that there were certaine pamphlets, which were not then so hurtfull: but if they had not bene speedily preuented, they might afterwards haue more greiuously annoyed the fayth. But it is worth the labour to note, how God by Luke hath applyed a remedie against those superfluous writings, and that by his maruailous counsell, he hath brought to passe, that by common consent, all other being reiected, these onely doe keepe their credit, in which his reuerent maiestie most manifestly doth shine: And so much lesse to be borne with is the doting folly of them, which thrust into the world fond and filthy fables, vnder the name of Nichodemus, or any other.

We are fully perswaded. The participle, which Luke doth vse, doth signifie things very well approued and voide of doubt: in the which the olde interpreter hath bene oft deceiued. And by this vnskilfulnesse hee hath left vs diuers excellent places corrupted. Amongst the which is that place of Paule, Rom. 14. 5. Where hee commaundeth, that euery man be fully perswaded in his minde: Least the conscience being tossed with doubtfull opinions, should wauer, and neuer stand sure. Thereof also commeth the nowine *Plerophorias*, which he corruptly hath translated plenitudinem; i. a fulnes, when that it is a certaine and strong perswasion grounded of faith, in the which godly mindes doe safely take their rest. And there is, as I sayd, a secret contrariety: For he challenging vnto himselfe the credit of a faithfull witnesse doth take away the credit from others, that deliuer contraries. This phrase (*Inter nos*) amongst vs, signifieth as much as *apud nos*, with vs. But hee buildeth sayth, as it seemeth, very slenderly, that buildeth vpon the report of men, which ought to be built vpon the onely word of God, and the full perswasion and assurance of fayth is wrought and sealed by the holy Ghost. I answer, that sayth is not satisfied with any testimonies of men: except the auctoritie of GOD doe hold the chiefeest places. Yet, where the inward confirmation of the spirit doeth goe before, there may some place bee giuen them in the historickall

known

knowledge of things. I call that historicall knowledge, which wee haue conceaued either by our own beholding of things don, or by the speech of others. For we may not giue lesse care to them that are eye witnesses of the manifest works of God, then we are to giue credit to experience. Adde this also, that Luke followeth not priuate aucthous, but the that were also ministers of the word: By which commendation hee extolleth them about the degree of mans aucthority. For he sheweth, that they vttered the Gospell to him, to whom the Lord had comitted the office of preaching the same. From hence also riseth that assured safety, wherof he speaketh a little after, which vnlesse it leane vpon God, may easily be disturbed. It is of great waight & force, that he calleth the ministers of the word, of whom he receiued his Gospell. For the faithfull doe gather hereof, that against witnesses no exception can be taken (as the Lawyers say) and which it is not lawfull to refuse. Erasmus (who out of Virgill borrowed that which he translated to haue been some part) did not sufficiently weigh, how much the calling of God is to be esteemed, or of what aucthoritie the same is. For Luke doth not speake prophanely: but hee biddeth vs in the person of his Theophilus to looke vpon the commaundement of Christ, that wee may with reuerence heare the sonne of God, speaking vnto vs by his Apostles. If any man had rather take and vse this phrase *word*, for the thing or substance, which is Christ, let him vse his owne sence. That some doe vnderstand by it Christ, it shoulde please mee very well, but that it were forced against the sence of the text, and too farre stretched. It is much that he sayth, they were beholders or eye witnesses. But in that he calleth them ministers, he exempteth them from the common order of men, to that ende that our sayth might haue his stay in heauen, and not on earth.

This insumme is Lukes minde, that hauing faithfully ingraued in letters that which thou hadst learned before with liuely voyce, thou mightest the more safely repose thy selfe in the doctrine which thou hast receiued: whereby it doth appeare, that God doth euery where prouide, least wee depending vpon the doubtfull wordes of men, our sayth shoulde fayle, or wauer. Whereby the vnthankfulnesse of the worlde is so much the lesse excusable; which as it were of purpose rashly desireth strayed and dispersed rumours, whereby it might bee vnconstant, and dooth wilfully forsake so great a benefit of GOD. But let vs holde that excellent difference, which the Lorde hath put betweene them, least foolish light beliefe doe vaunt it selfe for faith. In the meane while let vs suffer the worlde, as it is worthy to bee deceived with the baightes of foolish curiosnes, so to commit and giue ouer it selfe willingly to the deceites and iuglings of Sathan.

3. *As soone as I had searched out perfectly.* The olde translation hath (*omnia affecto*) I hauing followed all things. The Greeke worde is metaphorically deduced from them, which treade in others steppes, least ought shoulde escape them. For Luke woulde declare vnto vs a diligent studie and manner of learning. Even as Demosthenes vseth the sameword, when as he boasteth himselfe to haue beene so diligent in examining the embassage, which hee accuseth: saying that hee saw all things that were done, as if he himselfe had beene a beholder of them.

Matthew

Marke.

5. In the time of Herod, king of Iudea there was a certaine priest, named Zacharyas, of the course of Abia, and his wife was of the daughters of Aaron, and her name was Elizabeth.

6. Both were iust before God, and walked in all the commandements and ordinances of the Lord with out reproofe.

7. And they had no child because that Elizabeth was barren, and both were well stricken in age,

8. And it came to passe, as hee executed the priestes office before God, as his course came in order,

9. According to the custome of the priestes office, his lot was to burne incense when hee went into the temple of the Lord,

10. And the whole multitude of the people were without in prayer, while the incense was burning.

11. Then appeared vnto him an Angell of the Lord, standing on the right side of the Altar of incense

12. And when Zacharias saw him, he was troubled, and feare fell vpon him.

13. But the angell said vnto him feare not Zacharias, for thy prayer is heard, and thy wife Elizabeth shall beare a sonne, & thou shalt call his name Iohn.

Luke very aptly doth begin his Gospell with Iohn Baptist, euen as if hee that shoulde speake of the light of the day, should beginne wth the morning: For like vnto the morning he did goe before the sonne of righteoufnes, which now was about to rise. Other also make mention of him, but they describe him executing of his office. But Luke doth purchase authoritie to him not yet borne, when that hee declareth the wonders of diuine power euen in his infancie, and sheweth him to be appointed of God to bee a Prophet, before that men could knowe what manner of man hee shoulde bee. And for this purpose he doth it, that with greater reuerence he might be heard, when that he shoulde take vpon him that publike office, to go forth for the aduancement of the glory of Christ.

5. In the time of Herod. Hee was the sonne of Antipater, whom his father did promote cuen to the kingdome, for the augmentation of the which, hee had so great care, and did with so great diligence labour, that therefore there was giuen vnto him the surname of Great. Certaine doe thinke that hee was named heire of Luke, because hee was the first forreine King that reigned there, and therefore to be a fite time for their deliuerance, because that their scepter was now transposed to a strange nation. But they that so say, doe not very well vnderstand the Prophetie of Iacob: where-as the coming of the Messias is not simply promised after that the Jewes shall bee deprived of their empyre: But after that the same shoulde bee taken

ken away from the tribe of Iuda: neither yet in this holy Patriarkes minde, that the tribe of Iuda should be deprived of their Princely gouernance, before the coming of Christ: But that the rule of the people should be established in that stocke, vntill Christes coming: in whose person, the sure euerlasting continuance of the same should be. And although that what time the Machabeyes flourished, the tribe of Iuda was brought into a narrow streight, and shortly after Duke Iohn, the last of that stocke was slaine yet notwithstanding was not that rule altogether extinguished: For yet there remained the Synedriion, as it were a chosen counsell of the stocke and posteritie of Dauid, whose auctoritie was great: And did continue to Herod, who with most horrible slaughter of Iudges, reuenged punishment layd vpon him before: because that he being condemned of murder, was constrained to goe into voluntary exile, that he might escape the losse of his head. The reigne therefore of Herod, because he was a straunger brake not the scepter of the tribe of Iuda, but because that what residue of renowne foucer there remained in that stocke, by his theeuish dealing was abolished: That the kingly dignity fayled long before, and that the rule by little and little fell almost downe: that discontinuance doth not repugne with the prophesie of Iacob. For to the outward shew God hath promised two diuerse things, the throane of Dauid to last for euer: that after it were ouerthrowne, he would repayre the ruines of the same: the power of that kingdome to be euerlasting: and yet notwithstanding a young slippe should rise out of the stocke of Iesse: both the which things ought to be fulfilled.

God did suffer the rule which he had erected in the tribe of Iuda to be kept downe for a season, that the greater might be the diligence of the people, to hope for the kingdome of Christ. When the hope of the faithfull was as it were cut off by the destruction of that chosen counsell, suddenly the Lorde shone forth. And now this belongeth to the course of the historie, whilst that the time of this thing being done, was noted. But not rashly, vnder the name of the king was also noted the miserable state of the time, that the Iewes might know, that they should turne their eyes vnto the Messias, if that they assuredly had in estimation the league of God.

Zacharias of the course of Abia. It is knowne by sacred historie, that the families of the Priestes were deuicd by Dauid into certaine orders. In the which thing Dauid attempted nothing against the commaundement of the lawe, God did appoynt the Priesthood to Aaron and his Sonnes, the rest of the Leuites he appointed to lesser offices: In that thing nothing was altered of Dauid: but his deuce was partely to beware least any thing shoulde be done tumultuously among the people: And partely to preuent ambition, and also to bring to passe, that a few should not take all the charge to themselves, and the greater part sit idle at home. And in that distribution Abia, the Son of Eliazar possessed the right place. Zachary therefore was of the Priestly stocke, and also of the posteritie of Eliazar, who succeeded his Father in the high Priestes office. But how Elizabeth, when that she was of the daughters of Aaron could be cosine to Mary, I will shewe in his place,

And Luke doth mention the stocke of Elizabeth for honours sake : for it was lawfull for Zachary, according to the lawe, to take vnto him to wife, a daughter of a Leuite, of the common sort : Of this equall weelocke therefore it doth appeare, that this man was not despised in his degree.

6. Both were iust before God. A right and good testimonie doth he giue vnto them, not only that they behaued themselues holily and vprightly before men, but they were accounted iust before God. And also Luke doth briefly define that iustice. That they walked in the commandementes of the Lord, both are diligently to be noted. For although that to this ende Zachary and Elizabeth are prayd, that we might knowe that the Lintern which bare light before the Sonne of God was not chosen out of an vknowne stocke, but out of a most famous holy place : yet notwithstanding vnder their examples there is shewed to vs a rule of liuing godly and righteously. There ore in framing of a mans liue well, this is chiefest : that wee should endeauour our selues to bee approued before God. And we know a sincere heart & pure conscience, cheifly to be required of him. Therefore an ouerthwart order it is, if any man liue esteeming the vprightnes of his heart, should only frame his outward life in obedience of the law. For it is to be kept in memorie, that God, (to whom we are commanded to haue regard) looketh not vpon the outward visor of workes, but especially the heart. Further more, in the second place let obedience be added : that is, let not any man frame vnto himselfe, without the word of God, a newe kinde of righteousnesse, which shall please him : but let vs suffer our selues to be ruled by the power of God. For neither is this definition to bee neglected, those to be righteous, which frame their life after the preceptes of the lawe, in the which it is agreed, all fained worshippings to be nothing regarded with God, and the course of mans life to be wandring and erroneous, alsoone as it shall depart from his law. Betweene preceptes and iustifyinges there is this difference, that the latter name is properly referred to the exercises of godlines, and diuine worshippings : the first is more vniuersall, and it doth aswell appertaine to the worship of God, as to the dutie of charitie. For *hukim* which with the Hebrewes doth signifie statutes or decrees, the Greeke interpreter hath translated iustifications, *hukim* commonly in holy scripture doth signifie ceremonies, in the which the people exercised themselves in worshipping of God, and confession of faith. And although hypocrites in that poynt are meiuulous curious and exquisite : yet they haue nothing like with Zacharias and Elizabeth.

For sincere worshippers of God, as these two were, doe not greedily snatch vnto them naked and vaine ceremonies, but being bent vpon the trueth, they spiritually obserue them. But lewd and counterite men, although they dayly weary themselves in outward ceremonies : yet because they do not obserue them, as they were commaunded of the Lord, they doe nothing but loose their labour. Cheifly in these two wordes Luke dooth comprehend the whole law. But if Zachary and Elizabeth were vblamable as concerning the keeping of the law, they had no need of Christ. For the full obseruing of the law doth bring with it life, & where there is no transgression, the

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arraigned state doth cease. I answered, that these reportes of praise, wherewithall these children of God royally are adorned, are to be taken with some exception. For it is expedient to consider diligently, how God should deale with them euen according to his covenant, which he made with them, whereof the cheifest point is free reconciliation, and dayly forgiveness, whereby hee pardoneth them their offences. Iust and vnreprouable therefore are they thought, because that all their life doth witness them to be auowed to righteoussnes, the feare of God to reigne in them, while there is a certaine example of godlynes. But when their godly endeouour did farre differ from perfection, it coule not please God, without forgiveness and mercie: Wherefore the iustice which is prayed in them, dependeth vpon the free mercie of God. Where y it cometh to passe, that he accounteth not what vnrighteousnes so euer remaineth in them. So it is necessary to vnderstand what soeuer is found in scripture of the righteoussnes of men, that it ouerthrow not forgiveness of sinnes, to the which it leaneth, no otherwise then the building to the foundation. They that say that Zachary and Elizabeth were simply iust by faith, because that they freely pleased God by the mediator, doe wrieth Luks words into a contrary sense. As concerning the matter it selfe, they neyther say nothing, nor yet all. I graunt the righteoussnes which is ascribed to them, ought not to be imputed to the desert of works, but to the loue of Christ. The Lord yet notwithstanding, because he imputed not sinne vnto them, hath thought their holy life, although vnperfect, to bee woorthy the title of iust. The foolishnes of the Papistes will easily be refelled: For they lay this, which is attributed to Zachary against the iustice of faith: the which as it is certaine to proceede from the same: so ought it to be made subiect and brought vnder to the same: or as they commonly say, to be brought into a ranke vnder, to auoyde contention betweene them. And that which they so paint in respect of that one worde is friuolous. They say the commaundments of the law are iustifications, therefore that they iustifie vs. As though we denied true iustice to be taught in the law, or that we should say the fault to be in the doctrine, because it doth not iustifie: and that rather the cause is not in our weake flesh. Therefore that a hundred times I may graunt life to bee contained in the precepts of the law: yet notwithstanding nothing thereby shall come vnto men, which by nature are altogether turned away from the same. And now being borne againe by the spirit of God, yet notwithstanding they are farre from the pure obseruation of the same: Albeit, as I shewed of late, it is a faint and a vaine cauillation about the worde, when it signifieth nothing else, then statutes and appointed ceremonies.

7. And they had no child. It was appointed by the singular prouidence of God, that Iohn should be borne contrary to the common and accustomed order of nature. The same thing also was done in Isaac, in the which God determined to shew a token of his loue, not often seene, & worthy of remembrance. Elizabeth was barren, euen in the flower of her age. And old age doth finish childbearing euen in fruitfull women: therefore in these two lets a double miracle of diuine power doth appeare, and that to this ende, that the Lord would witnesse that prophet to be sent of him, as it were with stretched hand from heauen. And a mortall man was hee borne of earthly parents: but a meane a-

Gen. 18. 10

boue nature, (if I may so say) no otherwise commended him, then if he had fallen from heauen.

9. *According to the custome of the Priestes office.* The law did command to burne incense twise dayly : that is to witte, in the morning, and in the euening. That the Priestes had their order disposed among them, that Dauid did appoint euen as we haue said before. Therefore the law of God doth especially command that, which here is sayd of incense. The other things came from Dauid, that euerie familie should haue their course, notwithstanding Dauid did appoint nothing, but out of the commandement of the laye. For he onely did shew the way, whereby they might fulfill their charge enioyned them of God.

The name of the Temple here is taken for the holy place, that therefore is to be noted, because that sometime it signifieth the Poarch. It is sayd that Zachary went into the Temple, into the which it is not lawfull for any to goe, but for the Priestes. Therefore Luke doth say, the people stood a farre off, betweene whom and the altar of incense was a great distance. For betweene them was the altar, where vpon the sacrifice of beastes were offered. And it is to be noted, that Luke doth say, before God. For as oft as the Priest did enter into the holy place, he did goe as it were into the sight of God, that he might be a mediator betweene him and the people. For the Lord would haue this thing testified vnto his people, that the entrance into heauen was not open to any mortall men, except the priest did goe before.

Nay how long soeuer men liue here vpon earth, they cannot come to the heauenly thron, that they may find fauour there, but in the person of the mediator. Therefore when there were many Priestes, it was not lawfull for two of them together to execute the solemne office of intercession for the people : but therefore were they deuided into companies, that one onely should enter into the sanctuary : and therefore there was but one Priest at once.

Furthermore hither belonged that sweete perfume, that the faithfull might bee admonished, that the odour of their prayers ascended not into heauen, but by the sacrifice of the mediator. And it is to be sought out of the Epistle to the Hebrewes, how these figures shall agree to vs.

12. *Zacharias was troubled.* Although that therefore God doth not appeare vnto his seruantes, that he should feare them : yet it is profitable, yea and necessary for them to be moued with feare, that they being dismayed with themselves, might learne to yeelde iust honour to God. Neyther dooth Luke onely shew Zacharias to haue beene troubled : But he addeth, a feare fell vpon him. Whereby he declareth to haue beene so dismayed, that he was subdued to feare. Neyther doth feare of the presence of God so much strike men, that it should instruct them to reuerence, but that it might humble the pride of the flesh, the which is so haucie, that they will neuer submit themselves to God, vnlesse they be violently driuen to it. Whereof also we doe gather, that men onely in the absence of God, (that is, when they hide themselves from his sight) are proud, and flatter themselves. For if they had God as a
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iudge before their eyes, it should be necessary for them to fall downe flatte.

And if that this did befall to Zacharias (to whom the prayte of righteoufnesse was giuen) at the beholding of an Angell, which is but a sparke of diuine light: what shall become of vs wretches, if that the maiestie of God should bring vs to his shining brightnes? And now by the example of holy fathers we are taught, that no other are moued with the liuely feeling of the diuine presence, but that they quake and tremble at his sight, and also that they are foolish and dull, which doe heare him without feare.

Feare not zacharias. It is to be noted, that the glory of GOD is so fearefull to the godly, that they are not altogether deuoured of feare: but onely they are throwne downe from their vaine boldnesse, that they might humbly looke vpon him. As soone therefore as GOD hath vanquished the pride of the flesh in his faithfull, with his outstretched hand, he rayseth them vp againe. Hee dealeth otherwise with the reprobate. For as oft as they are drawn to the iudgement seate of God, meere desperation ouerwhelmeth them. And God doth giue againe this, as a iust rewarde vnto their vaine pleasures, in the which they haue made themselves drunken to wantonnes of sinning. Wherefore this comfort is to be embraced of vs, in that the Angell doth vphold Zachary, that it is not to be feared, where God is present with vs. For they deceiue themselves, such, who, that they might enioy peace, doe hide them from the face of GOD, seeing wee should seeke peace at him.

Thy prayer is heard. Zachary might seeme to haue done amisse, and contrary to the trade of his office, if hee entring into the holy place in the name of all the people, as a priuate man should pray for the obtaining of offspring. For the Priest taking vpon him to bee a common person, should be as it were forgetfull of himselfe, and should pray for the common safegard of the congregation. If we shall say, that it was not inconuenient, that Zacharias hauing performed his cheifest part of prayer, should then secondly haue some priuate consideration of himselfe, it were not an vnapt answere. But it is scarce probable, that Zachary should then haue prayed for the obtayning of a Sonne, whereof he was past hope by the olde age of his wife. Neyther is there any certaine moment of time gathered of the woordes of the Angell. Wherefore simply I interpret, that his desire was now heard, which long before he had poured out before God: Furthermore the desire of hauing offspring (so there be no excesse) is godly and holy, as may be gathered out of Scripture, which esteemeth this not in the last place among the blessings of God.

Thou shalt call his name. The name of Baptist I thinke was giuen vnto him, to declare the effecte of his office: *Iuchannan* For the which the Greekes say *Iohn*, with the Hebrewes doth signifie the grace of God. But many thinke the Sonne of Zachary so to bee called, as beloued of God. I doe not thinke that fauour heere to bee commended, which God thought him priuately to bee woorthy of, but that which his message was about to bring to all men. The time doth encrease the authoritie

and estimation of his name. because that before he was borne, God imprinted in him a signe of his loue.

Luke 1.

Matthew.

Marke.

14. And thou shalt haue ioy and gladnesse, and manie shall reioyce at his byrth.

15. For hee shall be great in the sight of the Lorde, and shall neither drinke wine, nor strong drinke, nor he shall be filled with the holy Ghost, euen from his mothers wombe.

16. And manie of the children of Israel shall he turne to their Lord God.

17. For he shall go before him in the spirit and power of Elia, to turne the heartes of the fathers to the children, and the disobedient, to the wisdom of the iust men, to make readie a people prepared for the Lord.

14. Thou shalt haue ioy. The Angell with signifie greater ioy, then that Zacharias could comprehend, of his new offspring: For he declared, that he should haue such a sonne, as he durst not wish for: And streight wayes hee goeth further, that that ioy should not be priuate, whereof onely the parentes should take their delectation, or that it might keepe it selfe in priuate houles, but should be common also to straungers, to whome the profit of his natiuitie should be declared. Therefore it is like, as if the Angell had sayd, not a sonne to haue bene borne alone to Zacharias, but a teacher and a prophet to all people.

The Papistes abused this place, that they might bring in a prophane custome, in celebrating the birth of Iohn. I let passe this, that they worshippe this day too much contray to all good order, with daunsinges, leapings, and all kind of lasciuiousnesse, with libertie of banketting, which order they saigne to be sacred vnto them: and that they suffer themselues in that celebration to be deluded with magicall artes, and deuillish deuises, no otherwise then as in the ceremonies of Ceres.

At this present it shall be sufficient for me breifly to declare the Angelles words to haue been wrested of them vnwisely, to the annuall celebrating of his byrth day: when the Angell simply did commend the ioy which should come to all godly men, by the fruit of his doctrine: For they reioyed for a prophet to be borne vnto them, by whose ministry they were brought in hope of saluation.

15. For he shall be great. He confirmeth that which hee sayd of ioy: because that Iohn was appointed to a thing great, & vnaccoustomed: Neither yet are the vertues wherein he did excell so much, here praised, as the greatnes & excellency of his office is extolled. Like as Christ, whē he affirmeth him to be the cheifest amōg the children of women, he hath not respect so much to the holines of his life, as to his ministry, that which streight waies after followeth. He shall

shall neither drinke wine nor strong drinke, is not so to be vnderstood, as though it were an especiall vertue of Iohn, to be a refraimer from wine: but because that by that especiall marke, God would note his seruant, whereby the world might know an euerlasting Nazurite. The priests also refrayned from wine and strong drinke, when they supplied their courses in the temple. The same abstinence was prescribed to the Nazarites, vntill their vow were fulfilled. And God would shew by a notable token, that Iohn in all his life was a Nazarite, dedicate vnto him, as we read also the same of Sampson. But vnder this colour there is not to be faigned a worshipping of God, in abstinence from wine, as Apes, that with ambition will follow whatsoever they may perceiue of their fathers deedes. Onely let all men haue temperaunce in estimation: they that find hurt in drinking of wine, let them willingly abstaine: they that lacke, let them take the want of it in good part. For that which pertayneth to the name of Sycera, I willingly agree to their iudgement, which shew with the Hebrewes doe thinke to be called euery kind of made wine.

Num. 6.3

Iud. 13.5.

Hee shall bee filled with the holy Ghost. This more inward note, wherewithall the Angell sayth Iohn shall be signed, was farre excellenter, then the outward and visible signe. In these wordes I thinke nothing els to be note, then his apparant towardnesse, which might shew a hope of his excellencie to come. Further, I say not such towardnesse, as is also in prophane men, but such as might accord to the greatnesse of his office.

The sence therefore is that the power and grace of the spirite should not then onely shewe it selfe in him, when that hee should aspyre to his office: but that euen from his mothers wombe he should excell in the giftes of the spirite, which as certaine signes shoulde testifie what hee should bee. For from his mothers wombe, is as much to say, as from his first infancie. I grant truly the power of the spirit to haue wrought in Iohn, when he was yet included in his mothers wombe. But in my iudgement the Angell here meant an other thing, that Iohn being yet an infant, shoulde be brought as it were into the theatre with a singular commendation of the grace of God: of the fulnesse it is not meete, that we should more subtilly dispute, or rather trifle with sophisters.

For the scripture doth by this name signifie no other thing, then the excellent, and not common abundance of the giftes of the spirite. To Christ alone we know the spirit to haue beene giuen without measure, that we might all drawe of his fulnesse: and to bee giuen to other by a certaine measure. But they that about our common capacitie are indued with more plentiful grace, are sayd to be full of the holy Ghost.

Iohn 1.6,
1. Cor. 12.
11
Eph. 4.7.

But as the larger power of the spirite was an extraordinarie gyfte of GOD in Iohn: so it is to bee noted, the spirit not to bee bestowed vpon all menne by and by in their infancie, but when it shall please God.

Iohn from the wombe did beare the token of his dignitie to come, Saule beeing yet but a Sheeheard, did beare no Kingly shewe, yet
at

at length he being chosen King, was sodainely chaunged into a newe man.

By this example therefore let vs learne, that the free woorking of the spirit is free in men from the first infancie, to the last poynt of age.

19. *And many of the children of Israell.* In these wordes he declareth a detestable diuision, which then was in the Church. For it was necessary to haue such Apostles, in whom conuersion to God might haue some place.

And truly there was so much corruption of doctrine, so much deprauing of manners, such a confuse gouernment, that it might be accounted a miracle, to finde a few to persist in godlinesse. If such exceeding dissention was in the olde Church, there is no cause, that the Papists should with a vaine cloake defend their superstitions, as if it were impossible the Church should erre: For because that vnder this name they doe vnderstand not the true and elect Sonnes of God, but the company of the wicked.

But we see more heere to be attributed to Iohn, then should agree to man. For when conuersion vnto God doth renew in men a spirituall life, it is not only the proper worke of God, but it doth excell euen the creation of men. Therefore by this meanes the ministers may seeme to be equall with GOD yea, and to be preferred in as much as he is a creator, seeing it is more to be borne againe into a heauenly life, then to be borne mortall men vpon the earth.

The answer is easie: For the Lord, when he attributeth such praise to his outward doctrine, he doth not seperate the same from the secret power of his spirit. For, because God chuseth men vnto him for ministers, whose ayde he useth in the building of his Church, together by them he woorketh with the secret power of his spirit, that their labour might be effectuell and fruitfull, as oft as the scripture commendeth this efficacie in the ministerie of men, let vs learne to yeelde the thing receiued to the grace of the spirit, without the which mans voyce to no effect should be spread abroad in the ayre. So Paul, while he reioyceth himselfe to be the minister of the spirite, challengeth nothing apart vnto himselfe, as though with his voyce he shoulde pierce the heartes of men, but hee declareth in his ministerie the power and grace of the spirit. These sayings are woorthie to be noted: For Sathan very artificially worketh to diminish the effect of doctrine, that he might weaken the grace of the spirit ioyned to it. I graunt that externall preaching seperately by it selfe can doe nothing, but because it is an instrument of diuine power for saluation, and an effectuell instrument by the grace of the spirit: let not vs seperate those things which God hath ioyned. But that the glory of conuersion and of faith, may remaine whole towards one God. The scripture doth admonish vs oftentimes, ministers through themselues to be nothing, but then he compareth with God, least any taking the honour from God, should bestow it amisse on them

In summe, the minister is sayd to turne them, whom God dooth conuert, through the worke of his minister. For hee is nothing but the hand of
God

God, & in this place both are expressed very well, now of the effect of doctrine there is enough spoken. That the same is not in the appointment or hand of the minister to convert men vnto God, of this wee gather because that Iohn did not convert all commonly to God: (the which thing without doubt hee would haue done, if all things had beene giuen him that he desired) but he turned them onely, whome it pleased God effectually to call. In conclusion, the same is taught here of the Angell, which Paule taught to the Romans: Faith commeth of hearing, but by faith none are lightened, but they to whom the Lord hath inwardly reuealed his arme.

Rom. 10.

17:

17. *Hee shall goe before him.* In these wordes hee defineth what the office of Iohn should be, and by this note he distinguisheth him from the rest of the Prophetes, to whom a peculiar and proper message was commanded, when that Iohn for this thing onely was sent, that he might go before Christ, as an officer before a king. So the Lord speaketh by Malachy. Behold I send, my Angell, which shall prepare my way before me. In summe, to no other poynnt belonged the calling of Iohn, but to prepare an audience for Christ, and to get him disciples. And in that no expresse mention is here made of Christ, but that the Angell maketh Iohn a fore-walker or standert bearer of the eternall God: hercof the eternall diuinitie of Christ is gathered.

Mal. 3.

1.

With the spirit and power of Elyas. The spirit and power I take for the power or excellency of the spirit, wherewithall Elyas was endued. For neither must we inuent the dreame of Pythagoras, that the soule of the Prophet should goe into the body of Iohn. But that spirit of God, which wrought mightily in Elyas, should after exercise like power and effect in the Baptist. but the latter name is added expositiuely, to expresse the kinde of grace, wherein Elyas most did excell: namely, that he being furnished with heavenly power, might merueilously restore the decayed worship of God: For such repaying passed the power of man. Now that which is begunne of Iohn was no lesse merueilous, wherfore it is no meruell, if it behooued him to be adorned with the same gift.

That he may turne the hearts of the fathers. Here the Angell doth note what especial similitude Iohn had with Elyas. Therefore hee said he was sent that he might gather people dispersed into vnitie of faith: for the turning of fathers to sons, is a reduction from discord to loue, whereof it followeth that there was a certaine breach, the which might cutte, or as it were rend the people. We knowe in the time of Elyas what a horrible defection of the people there was, how shamefully they were degenerate from their fathers they were so deuided, that they could be nothing lesse thought, then the sonnes of Abraham. Elias brought them againe into a holy consent, such a gathering together of fathers with children there began to be by Iohn, the which Christ at length finished: wherfore Malachy when hee speaketh of bringing againe, doth signify that the state of the Church should be so deuided (when the other Elyas should come) as it is sufficiently knowne by histories, to haue beene then, and shall more apparantly be seene in their places. The doctrine of the scripture was polluted by innumerable lyes, the worshipping of God was corrupt with more then grosse superstitions, religion was deuided into diuers sectes. The priestes openly wicked and Epicures, the common people

it selfe was drowned in wickednes. Furthermore nothing was founde. That is sayd here, *the heartes of fathers to children*, it is vnproper. For it behooueth rather to conuert the sonnes, which were truce breakers, and had gone from the right faith of fathers. But although the Euangeliste doth not so warily expresse the order, yet the sense is not obscure, that God to bring to passe, by the worke of Iohn, that they againe should grow together into holy concord, which first were diuided amongst themselues: Eyther part is had of the Prophet, which notwithstanding ment nothing else then to signifie mutuall agreement. But because that men oftentimes so conspire among themselues, that some should more alienate some from God: the Angell doth therewithall define, what manner of conuersion it shoulde bee, which hee doth promise: yea such as should call the disobedient to the wisdome of the righteous. That therefore is to be noted, that wee knit not our selues fast with the wicked, vnder the false cloke of concord. Because the name of peace is goodly and pleasant, as oft as it cometh in the scriptures, it is greedily snatched of the Papistes, to procure vs enuy: as though that we (which endeouour to call the world from disloyall reuolting to Christ) were the authours of discorde. but by this text, their foolishnesse is very well refelled: because the Angell doth shew the manner of true and lawfull conuersion, hee maketh the stay and bande of it to bee the wisdome of the righteous. Accursed therefore bee that peace and vni- tie, wherein men agree amongst themselues against God. Furthermore, it is not to be doubted, but that sayth is vnderstoode by the wisdome of righteous men, as of the contrary the vnfaithfull are called disobedient.

Truly an excellent testimonie of sayth, whereby wee learne that wee then are wise to saluation, when wee are obedient to the word of God. The worlde also hath his wisdome, but corrupt, and therefore deadly: and which is condemned of vanitie. Although the Angell signifieth ouerthwartly shadowed wisdome, wicked and accursed before G O D, wherein the sons of this world please themselues. Now wee vnderstand men so to be reconciled amongst themselues, that chiefly they might come againe in fauour with God. That which straight wayes followeth of making ready a people, prepared for the Lord, doth agree with that part, that Iohn should bee the cryer of Christ, that hee might walke before his face, for the ende of his preaching was to make the people dilligēt to heare the doctrine of Christ. Although the participle *Karaskuafmenon* doth not so much signifie perfection with the Greekes, as the forme and aptnes, whereby thinges are made fitte for their vse. The which signification shall not ill agree with this place, that Iohn was sent to prepare and frame that people for Christ, which otherwile being rude and vnpolished, would neuer shew it selfe easie to bee taught.

Luke 1.

Matthew Marke.

18. Then zacharias sayde vnto the Angel, where by shall I knowe this? for I am an olde man, and my wife is of a great age.

19. And the Angell answered, and sayd vnto him: I am Gabryell, that stand in the presence of

of God, and am sent to speake vnto thee, and to shew thee these good tidings.

20. And behold thou shalt be dumb, and not be able to speake, vntil the day that these things be done, because thou beleueest not my words, which shall bee fulfilled in their season

18. Then Zacharias sayde vnto the Angell. Here followeth the infidelitie of Zacharias, and the punishment which the Lord layd vpon his vnfaithfulnesse. He prayed for the obtaining of offspring. now, when it is promised, as forgetfull of his vowes and fayth, hee distrusteth. Albeit at the first blush it might seeme a harde thing that with his answer God should so grieuously be offended. He obiectioneth his old age: euen so did Abraham, whose fayth yet is so much praysed, that Paule should say, his body which now was dead, was not considered. Nor the vnfruitefull wombe of Sara: but simply that he reposed himselfe in the truth and the power of God. Zachary doth aske how, or by what argument he may bee the more assured. And Gedeon was not reprehended, though that twise he requiied a signe: And also a little after there is the like exception giuen of Mary: How shall this thing be, when I know not man? The which notwithstanding the Angell dooth dissemble as if there were no fault in her: how cometh it then, that the Lorde shoulde so seuerely chasten Zacharyas as guiltie of most greiuous sinne? Verily I graunt, if the words only should be looked on, eyther that they did all offend a like, or Zachary not to haue offended at all. But when it is conuenient to iudge the doinges and sayings of men, according to the affection of the hart, it is rather to be stood to the iudgment of God, to whom the priue secret places of the heart are open. The Lord without doubt doth see something worse in Zachary, then his words do shew: And therefore the Lord waxed angry with him, that by distrust hee should put away his promised fauour to him. It is not our dutie to prescribe a law for God, but let it be free for him to punish that in one, which offence hee doth pardon in others. But it doth easily appeare, that the cause of Zachary differed from the cause of Abraham, Gedeon, or Mary. That in words is not discerned. The knowledg therfore is to be left to god, whose eyes doe pearse euen to the fountaine of the heart. So God discerned betweene the laughter of Sara and of Abraham: when notwithstanding, the one differed not in likeness from the other. Furthermore the cause of distrust in Zacharyas, was, that hee staying in the order of nature, did attribute litle to the power of God then was meete. For ouer straightly and sparingly doe they thinke of the works of God which beleue not him to be able to doe more, then according to nature is credible, as though his hande were subiect to our sense, or included in earthly means: but it is the property of faith much more to beleeue, then the reason of the flesh could say might come to passe. zacharias doubted not, whether it were the voyce of God, or no. But when he was ouermuch bent vpon the world, an ouerthwart doubting crept into his minde, whether that should come to passe, that he heard or no. And in that thing he did no final iniury to God: for it were as much, as if he should dispute whether god might be accounted true or no, who he surely knew had spoke in which was sufficient, although it is to be known Zacharias not

Rom. 4. 19.

Iud. 6. 17.

Gen. 17. 17.
& 18. 10.

not to haue been so vnbeleeuin g, that altogether he should shrinke from faith. For there is a generall faith, which doth take hold of the promise of eternall saluation, and the testimonie of free adoption. And euen as after God hath once receiued vs into fauour, he specially promisetht many thinges that he will feede, that he will take vs out of perils, he will be a defender of our innocencie, and preferue our life: so there is a particular faith, which answereth to euery such promises. Therefore sometime it may be, that some man trusting in God of forgiuenes of sinnes, and of saluation, yet in some point should wauer: for either he should feare to much in the danger of death, or be too much carefull for dayly sustenancce, or ouer doubtfull in his counsailes. Such was the incredulitie of Zacharie, because that hee hauing the roote and foundation of faith, did onely sticke in this one point, whether God would giue him a sonne. Wherefore let vs know, that they doe not by and by fall and depart from the faith, when their infirmities in some particular affaires doe disturbe or moue them, nor faith to faile at the root, as oft as the boughes doe shake at diuerse inuasions or blastes. Graunt that Zachary meant nothing lesse then to call to tryall the assurance of the diuine promise. But when that generally he was periwaded God to bee true, hee was drawne by stealth into a shrewd estate, by the craft and deceites of Sathan. So much the rather it becommeth vs to be readie bent to watching day and night For which of vs shall be lure from the deceites of Sathan, into the which wee see a man of singular holines to haue fallen, who diligently in all his life took heede to himselfe?

19 *I am Gabryell.* In these wordes the Angell doth shew, that the credit was taken not from him, but from God, of whom he was sent, and whose message he brought: and therefore he reprobueth Zachary, that he was disobedient against God. To stand before God, signifieth as much as to be readie at commandement, as if he should say, that he was no mortall man, but a heauenly spirit, neither rashly to haue come, but as it became the minister of God, faithfully to fulfill his office: whereof it followeth, that God the authour of the promise is vnworthily hurt, and despised in the person of his messenger. To that purpose tendeth the saying of Christ. Hee that doth despise you, despiseth me. For although the preaching of the Gospell is not by Angels, brought vnto vs from heauen: yet because God doth witnesse by so many miracles the same to proceed from him, and Christ the prince and cheife of Angels published the same once with his own mouth, that hee might sanctifie and establish the same for euer, no lesse maiestie ought to persist in it, then it all the Angels openly crying from heauen should witnesse the same. Nay, the Apostle in his Epistle to the Hebrewes, not being satisfied to say, that the voyce of the Gospell, which is sounded out by the voyce of men, is equall to the law giuen by Angels: but doth gather his argument from the lesser to the greater: If the word (saith he) brought by Angels being reiecte, was not without punishment, much lesse shall they escape reuenge, which this day despise the voyce of Christ, who can strike the heauen and earth. Let vs therefore learne to perourme obedience of faith to God, the which he doth more account then all sacrifices.

Gabryell doth signifie might or strength, or the gouernance of God, and this name was giuen to the Angell for our sake, that wee might learne

to attribut nothing as proper to Angels, whē that what vertue soeuer they haue is diuine, and of God. The Participle *Parestas* is of the preter tense: but in such wordes it is very well knowne, the preter tense to be put in the place of the present tense, especially where continuall action is signified.

Furthermore, the Angell, as it was lately sayd, doth affirme in those words himselfe to be the perpetuall messenger of God. That phrase of *shewing good tidings* doth amplifie the fault of Zachary, that he should be vngratefull to God promising him gently a thing ioyfull, and to be wished for of all.

20. *And behold, thou shalt be dumbe.* This kinde of punishment was like to be layd on Zachary, that hee beeing dumbe might looke for the comming of the promise, the which when he ought to haue heard it with silence, hee as it were brake it off with greiuous repining murmuring. Fayth keepeth silence, that it may be attentiuē to the word of God. Furthermore, it hath also the courses of speaking: That it may answere Amen, according to that of *Osee. 2. 23* I will say to them, you are my people, And they shall say to mee, thou art our God. And because that Zachary answered rashly to the worde of God, this fauour was not graunted to him, that streightwayes he should breake forth into giuing of thanks. but the vse of his tongue, which was ouer hastie was taken from him, for a time: Yet notwithstanding G O D doth gently mitigate his paine. First, because he doth end the same in tenne monethes: then that hee suffered Zachary not to be deprived of that benefit, whereof hee was vnworthy. He vseth the same gentlenes dayly towards vs. For as our fayth is small, and wee obiekt many impedimentes, it is needefull that the trueth of G O D, by some meanes should breake out, that it might continue his course towards vs. That is the meaning of the Angell, when accusing Zachary of vnbeleife, hee doth yet pronounce, that thing should be finished, which Zachary did not beleue: Therefore Zachary is not a little cheered, when he heareth that his faith is not ouerthrowne of God, by reaso of his fault: but that at length it should appeare victorious. And sometime it cometh to passe, that the Lord doth performe and fulfill that, which was promised to vnbelecuers, how much soeuer they resist: of the which thing we haue an example worthy of remembrance, in king Achaz: *Isa. 11. 7.* who when he forsooke his promised safegard, was yet deliuered fro his enemies, but that tēded not to his profit, but for the saluatiō of the chosen people. There is another thing in Zachary to be considered, to whom the Lord doth so forgieue the lacke of fayth, that therewithall hee yet correcteth it.

Luke, 1

Matthew

Marke.

21. Now the people waited for Zacharias, and marueiled that he carried so long in the temple.

22. And when hee came out hee could not speake vnto them: then they perceived, that he had seene a vision in the Temple, for hee made signes vnto them, and remained dumbe.

23. And it came to passe, when the dayes of his office were fulfilled, that hee departed to his owne house.

24. And after those dayes his wife Elizabeth conceaued, and hid her selfe five monethes, saying:

25. Thus hath the Lord dealt with me in the daies wherein hee looked on mee, to take from mee my rebuke among men.

22. And the people waited. Luke declareth that the people also was a witness of this vision. Zachary taried longer in the temple then the wont was: Heereon suspicion grewe, some vnaccustomed thing to haue befallne to him: he being come out, by gestures and signes doth shew, that he is become dumb. And it is credible, that some tokens of feare remaind in his countenance, wherby they gather that God had appeared to him. And there were in that age few or no visions: but the people did remember that they had beene common before in their fathers time. Wherefore not without cause did they iudge of these manifest signes. For it was not common, that suddenly without sickness he should be dumbe: And that after longer delay then neede was, hee should come so amazed out of the temple. Furthermore, the name of the temple, as we now sayd, is vsed for the holy place, where the altar of incense was: from thence the Sacrifice being finished, the priests were wont to goe into their porche, and thence they blessed the people.

23. When the dayes were fulfilled. Luke doth put the word *Liturgian* for the executing of the office, which did goe by course in order to euery one, euen as we haue sayd. That it is sayd, that Zachary returned to his house, the time of his charge being past: hereout we gather the priests so long as they were in their courses did refrain from their houses, that they might altogether be giuen and fixed to the seruice of God. For this purpose there were Galleries made in the sides of the temple in the which they had chambers. The lawe did not forbid the priest fro his own house: but that it restrained them from touching of their wiues, when they shoulde eate the holy bread: It is probable that when many with small reuerence did handle the holy things, this remedie was inuented, that they being remoued fro al allurements, might keepe themselves cleane & free fro al pollution: neither was the lying with their wiues only forbidden the but also the drinking of wine & strong drink. Therefore when the order of their diet was chaunged, it was profitable not to depart from the temple, that the sight of the place might teach them to seeke & esteem of purity, euen as it was appoynted of the Lord. It was also profitable that all occasion of wantonnes should thereby be taken away, that with more diligence they might apply their charge. The Papistes this day vnder this pretēce do defend their tyrannous lawe of vnmarried life. For thus they reason seeing the priests in times past were commanded to abstaine from their wiues, when they were busied in holy affayres: now worthily may perpetuall continence be required of our priests, which not by course of times, but dayly, do sacrifice: Chiefly, for that the dignitie of holy rites is far more excellent then vnder the law. But I woulde knowe, why they doe

2. Reg. 6. 5.

1. Sam. 21. 4

Leuit. 10 9

doe not also abstaine from wine and strong drinke. For neither is it lawfull to seperate those commaundements, which God hath ioyned that onely halfe should be obserued, and the other part neglected. The company with their wiues is not so expressly forbidden, as the drinking of wine. If vnder the colour of the law, the Pope doth inioyne to his priests single life, why doth hee permit them wine? Nay, by this reason hee ought to shut vp his priests in some innermost roomes of his Temples, that they being shut in prisons, might passe all their life without the fellowship of women and people. Now we see plainly they wickedly pretend the law of God, from which they depart: But notwithstanding a full answer dependeth of the difference of the law and the Gospell. The priest did place himselfe before God, to purge away the sinnes of the people, that he might bee as it were a mediator of God & men: it behooued him, vpon whom that office was layd, to haue some note, whereby he being exempted from the common order of men, might be knowne as the figure of the true mediator. For this purpose were appointed the holy garments and annoynting: Now in the publike ministers and pastors of the Church there is no such like thing, I speake of the ministers, which Christ instituted to feed his flock, not of those which the Pope maketh, rather butchers to sacrifice Christ, then priests. wherefore let vs repose our selues in that sentence of the holy Ghost, which pronounceth that matrimony is honourable in all men. Ezcc. 24. 10
Heb. 13. 4.

24. *Shee hidde her selfe.* This seemeth to bee absurd, as though that shee shoulde bee ashamed of diuine blessing. Some thinke that the thing being yet doubtfull, shee durst not come abroad, least that she should make her selfe a laughing stocke, if her opinion should bee made frustrate, which she had conceaued. And I doe so accompt of the promise made, that she was assured it shoulde come to passe. For when shee perceaued such grieuous punishment to bee layde vpon her husbaud, for the vnadvised fall of his tongue, how coulde shee five monethes space nourish such doubt in her heart: and her wordes doe plainly declare that her hope was not wauering, or doubtfull: For when she saith the Lorde hath doone it, shee wisely and without feare declareth the Lords knowne fauour.

There might bee two causes of her hiding. First that the myracle of GOD shoulde not bee layde open to the diuers speeches of men, before it shoulde appauntly bee knowne. For it is the custome of the world to speake oftentimes rashly and very vnreuerently of the workes of God.

The other cause was, that when men of a sodaine shoulde see her great with childe, they shoulde the more bee stirred to prayse the Lorde. For those workes of God, which by little and little rise vp amongst vs, in processe of time are naught set by. Therefore Elizabeth hid and absented her selfe not for her owne sake, but for the cause of others.

25. *Thus hath the Lorde delt with mee.* Shee setteth forth the goodnesse of GOD priuately, vntill the appoynted time shoulde come of publishing the same vnto the worlde. It is to bee supposed that her husband by writing had enformed her of the promised childe, in that the more certainly and with the chearefuller minde shee sheweth that GOD is the authour of this benefitte. And that shee approoueth in her next

woordes. *In the dayes wherein hee looked on mee, to take from mee my rebuke among men.* Shee declareth, that the cause of barrenesse was, for that the fauour of God was turned from her.

Amongst the earthly blessings, which God doeth giue, the scripture accounteth this as chiefe, that he vouchsafeth to giue vs children. For if the increase of bruit beasts is a blessing of God: then how much more excellent man is then beasts, so much more to be esteemed and accounted of, is the increase of men then of beasts. Neither is it a slight or comon honour, that when God alone deserueth to be accounted a father, he yet admitteth earthly men into the fellowship of this name with him. Therefore that doctrine is diligently to be considered, that children are the inheritance of the Lord. Psalme. 127. 3. and the fruite of the wombe his rewarde. But Elizabeth had a further regard: because that beyond the common order of nature, she being barren and olde, had now conceived by a wonderfull miracle of God.

To take from me my rebuke among men. Barrenesse was not without cause esteemed as a reproach, seeing that the blessing of the wombe was accounted amongst the especial testimonies of Gods fauour & loue. Some thinke that this did specially appertaine to the people of the old law, because that Christ was to come of the seede of Abraham. But that belonged onely to the tribe of Iuda. Others more rightly affirme, that the increase of the people of God was prosperous and happy, for that it was said to Abraham, Gen. 13. 15. *Thy seed shall be as the sand of the sea, & as the stars of heauen:* But the generall blessing which reacheth vnto all mankind, & the promise made vnto Abraham, which is peculiar to the Church of God, ought to be ioyned together.

Let parents learne to be thankfull to God for their childre, but let them that want, learne by the same to humble theselues. Elizabeth accounteth that this reproach is but before men, because that it is but a temporal chastisement, by which we are nothing the further from the kingdome of heauen.

Luke 1.

Matthew Marke.

26. *And in the sixt moneth the Angell Gabriell was sent from GOD vnto a Cittie of Galilee, named Nazareth.*

27. *To a virgin affianced to a man, whose name was Ioseph, of the house of David: and the virgins name was Mary.*

28. *And the Angell went in vnto her, and sayde, Hail, thou art freely beloued, the Lorde is with thee: Blessed art thou among women.*

29. *And when she sawe him, shee was troubled at his saying, and thought what maner of salutation that should be.*

30. *Then the Angell sayde vnto her, Feare not Mary: for thou hast found fauour with God.*

31. For loe, thou shalt conceive in thy wombe, and beare a sonne, and call his name Iesus.

32. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the most high: and the Lord God shall giue him the thronc of Dauid his father.

33. And he shall reigne ouer the house Iacob for ever, and of his kingdomc shall be no ende.

26. In the sixt moneth. The order of Gods counsell is wonderfull, and much differeth from the common iudgement of men. In that he woulde that the beginning of the generation should be more famous in his forerunner, or cryer, then in his owne sonne. The prophecic of Iohn Baptiste vttered in the temple, is knowne in euery place. But Christ is promised to a virgin, in an vknowne towne of Iuda, and this prophecic remaineth buried in the bosome of one maide. But so it was requisite to bee, that euen in Christes birth that might be fulfilled. That God by foolishnesse might saue them that beleueue. 1. Cor. 1. 21. But so was this treasure of this secret mysterie layde vpp with the Virgin, that at the length in his time it might come forth to all the godly. This secret reposing of it is (I graunt) contemptible: but such as was most meete both for the tryall of the humilitie of our faith, and also for the beating downe of the pride of the wicked.

And let vs (although the reason do not at the first appeare) learne with modestie to submit our selues to God: neyther in this let it greiue vs to learn of her, that bore Christ the eternall wisdome of God, in her womb. Nothing is more to be taken heed of, then that wee through our proud contempt bereaue not our selues of the knowledge of the incomparable misterie, which God wil should bee hid in his little ones, and such as seeke for knowledge. This seemeth to me to be the cause, why he chose a virgin espoused to a man. The imagination of Origen, that he so wrought it, that he might keepe secret from sathan the saluation, which he prepared to giue to men, hath no liklyhood with it. The vayle of matrimonie was therefore spread before the eies of the world that he whom they commonly supposed to be the sonne of Ioseph, the godly at length by fayth should know to be the sonne of God. And yet Christ came not forth in such base and meane sort, but that the heavenly Father shewed forth in him euen at the beginning, the glory of his Godhead. For the Angels declared, that the Sauiour was borne. But their voyce being heard, onely of the Shepheards was not spread farre.

There was one wonder famous amongst the rest, that the wise men which came from the East, did euery where reporte, that a starre appeared vnto them, as a testimonie of the birth of the great king: yet wee see howe GOD kept his Sonne, as it were in secrete, vntill the time came, that hee should fully be shewed. Then hee erected, as one should say, a Theatre, from whence he might plainly be beholden. The participle, *Memestemenen*, which the Euangelist doeth vse, doeth signifie, that hee then was a Virgin, promised to a husbnde, but not deliuered as a wife to a

husband. For it was a custome amongst the Iewes, that the parentes shoulde keepe their daughters at home with them, for a time, after that they were espoused vnto men: Or else that law for the slandered wife, which is in Deut 22 13. were in vaine. Luke sayth that Ioseph was of the stocke of Dauid, because that the families were wont to be accounted by the names of men: of the which matter we will speake more in another place.

28. *Haile thou that art freely beloued.* Because that the message was wonderfull, and almost incredible: therefore the Angell began with a commendation of the fauour and grace of God: And seeing that by reason of our dull vnderstanding, our mindes are driuen to such a straight, that they cannot comprehend the wonderfull greatnesse of God his works. This is the best remedie that we stirre vp our mindes to meditate and consider the infinitenesse of his grace. Therefore since that the vnderstanding of God his goodnesse is the gate of sayth: The Angell tooke this (and not without cause) as the best order, that by occupying the minde of the Virgin in meditating of the fauour of God, shee might be the better prepared to receiue and vnderstand that incomprehensible mysterie. For the participle *Kecharitomene*, which Luke doeth vse, signifieth the free fauour of God, as appeareth more plainly in the Epistle to the Ephesians. 1. 6. where Paule intreating of our reconciliation with GOD sayth that God by his beloued Sonne *Echaritosen*, that is, receiued vs into his grace, and through his fauour he embraced vs, which before were his enemies. Afterwardes the Angell sayth, that *God was with her*. For vpon whom God vouchsafeth once to bestow his loue, vnto them hee declareth himselfe to be mercifull and bountifull, and to them hee giueth and bestoweth his giftes, and therefore is the third parte of the sentence added, *Blessed art thou among women*: For hee vseth this worde *Blessing* as the effect and prooffe of the fauour of GOD. For in mine opinion, it is not heere vsed for a praying of her, but doeth rather signifie a happynesse or blessednesse.

So Paule vseth to pray, that the saythfull might haue first grace, then peace: that is, all kinde of good thinges, signifying thereby that we are then become blessed and rich, when wee are beloued of God, the author of all good thinges. Then if the blessednesse, righteousnesse and life of Marie doe come of the free loue of God: and that her vertues and all her excellencie is the meere liberalitie of God: Then deale they very preposterously, that teach vs to atke those thinges of her, which shee with vs receiue from an other.

But very grosse is the folly of the Papistes, which as it were by a magicall coniuring, haue turned this salutation into a prayer: And by want of reason they haue bene thus farre drawne, that their Preachers might not pray in the pulpit for the assistance and grace of God his spirite, but by their *Haile Mary*. And besides that, this is to bee accounted as a salutation onely they rashly take vnto themselves the office of an other, which God ioyne not to any but to the Angell: but twise more foolish is that imitation, that they salute one that is absent.

19. *When shee sawe him, shee was troubled.* Luke doth not say that shee was troubled at the sight of the Angell, but at his saying : why then dooth hee also make mention of the sight ? This, (as I interprete it) was the cause : Mary seeing some portion of heavenly glory in the Angel, through the reuerence of G O D, shee conceaued a sodaine feare . Therefore shee was troubled, for that shee perceiued, that it was not a mortall manne that did salute her , but an Angell of G O D . But Luke dooth not say, that shee was so troubled, that shee was thereby amazed : but rather sheweth the signe of an attentue and very ready minde, when that hee presently addeth, that shee thought with herselfe what manner of salutation this should be: that is whereto it tended , and what it meant. For presently shee thought that the Angell was not sent to her for nothing.

And by this example wee are admonished : First, that the workes of God are not sleightly to be passed ouer. Then likewise wee ought so to weigh and consider them, that reuerence and feare may goe before.

30. *Feare not Mary.* In that hee willeth her not to be afraide, let vs alwayes remember howe weake our fleshe is , and that it cannot bee, but that wee shoulde bee afraide, so oft as but the least sparke of G O D his glory doth appeare . For when we earnestly consider the presence of God, wee cannot imagine a vaine or ydle presence. Therefore when wee are all in daunger of his iudgement, out of feare there riseth a trembling, vntill hee sheweth himselfe as a father. The holy Virginne sawe amongst her people such a vile heape of sinnes, that there was good cause why shee shoulde be afraide of the greater vengeance.

Wherefore, that the Angell might put this feare away, hee sayth, that hee is a witness and tydings bringer of that, which is wonderfull good. Luke vsed this Hebrew phrase, to *finde fauour*, for to haue G O D mercifull. For it cannot bee sayde, that hee found fauour, that sought the same : but hee to whome it was offered , and seeing that examples of the same are sufficiently knowne, it were but vaine here to alledge them,

31. *For loe thou shalt conceaue in thy wombe.* The Angell frameth his woordes, firste, to the Prophecie of Elsaye , and then to other places of the Prophets, that it might thereby the better sincke into the Virginnes minde. For such Prophecies weere knowne and common, euery where among the godly : yet with all it is to bee noted, that the Angell did not whisper that onely in the eare of the Virginne, but hee brought that gladd tidings of saluation, which not long after was to bee spread throughout the whole world.

Wherefore it is not doone without the counsell of G O D , that hee so plainly expresth the consent betwene the olde Prophecies and the present message of the conming of Christe , The woorde *Conceauing*, is sufficient to confute the witlesse fancie, as well of Marcyon, as of Manicheus. For thereby may bee easily gathered, that Mary did not bring forth an aery body or Ghost, but such fruit as shee before had conceaued in her wombe.

And thou shalt call his name Iesus. Mat. 1. 21. rendresth the cause why this name was giuen him. For that hee shoulde saue his people from their sinnes: so that in the very name Saluation is promised, and the cause is shewed to what ende Christ was sent of his Father into the worlde. As hee sayth himselfe, that hee came not to destroy, but to saue the world. Iohn 12. 47. Let vs also remember that this name was not giuen him by the will of man, but by the Angell, at the commaundement of God, that our faith might be fastened in heauen, and not vpon earth. It is deriued of *Iashang* which with the Hebrewes is saluation: and from thence cometh that worde, which signifieth to saue. Furthermore they doe but fondly reason, which endeuour to deriue it of that Hebrewenowne *ihushug*.

It appeareth that the Rabbynes did deale very maliciously, in that they neuer giue him that honourable title of Christ, but in euery place write Iesu: or rather imagine him to haue bin some base or degenerate Iew. Therefore their writing deserueth as much credit and authoritie, as doth the barking of a dog. That they object that he should be farre inferior to the dignitie of the sonne of God, if he should haue a name common with others, may also be pretended of Christ. But the answer to them both is very easie. For that which before was shadowed vnder the law, is fully and wholly performed in the Sonne of GOD: or that he had the substance of that in him, which was before but figured. The other objection is of no greater force. They deny that the name of Iesu is holy & reuerent, before whom euery knee Philip. 2. 9. ought to bow, vnlesse it did onely belong to the Son of God. Paule doth not attribute vnto him a magicall name, in whose syllabkes the maiesty were included: but his words were to this purpose, as if he should haue said great power was giuen vnto Christ of his father, vnder the which all the world should bow. Therefore let vs bid such faigned inuentions fare well, and let vs knowe that the name of Iesu was giuen vnto Christ, that the faithfull might learne to seeke in him that, which before was shadowed vnder the lawe.

32. *Hee shall be great.* The Angell saide the same Iohn Baptist, whom yet hee woulde not make equall with Christ. But the Baptist was great in his order: And presently after he declareth that the greatnesse of Christ extolled him farre aboue all creatures. For this hath hee alone proper and peculyar to himselfe, that he shoulde bee called the sonne of God, as the Apostle proueth Heb. 1. 5.

I graunt that sometimes in the scripture the Angelles and kings are adorned with this title: but these are in common called the sonnes of God, for the excellencie which God hath giuen them. And it is cleare, and not to be doubted, but that God exempteth his sonne from all the rest, when that he peculyarly saith vnto him, Psalme 2. 7. Thou art my Sonne: Therefore Christ is accounted here neither among Angels nor men, that he might be accounted one of common sort or company of the children of God: for that which is giuen vnto him, it is lawfull for none other to take to themselves.

It is true that Kings are the children of God, but not by right of nature, but because the Lorde hath bestowed that honour vpon them. Neither doth this title belong vnto Angelles, but as they vnder their chiefe head:
excell.

excell amongst the creatures. And we also are children but by adoption which we obtaine by faith, for we haue it not of nature. But Christ is the onely, and the onely-begotten sonne. That interpretation is very false & deceitfull, which that filthy dog Seruetus wresteth, the word of the future tence, that hee might proue that Christ was not the eternall sonne of God: but that he began then so to be accepted when that hee tooke vpon him our flesh. Hee argueth that Christ was not the son of God, before that he being clothed with flesh, did appeare in the world, because that the angell said: He shall be called. I except against this, & affirme that the words of the Angell do signifie nothing else, but that such a sonne of God should be made manifest in the flesh, as was eternall: For to bee called is referred to the apparant knowledge. But there is great difference here betweene these two enterpretations, whether hee began now to be the sonne of God, which was not before, or that he was made knowne vnto men, that they might know him to bee the same which was promised in times past. And truly, sith that God in all ages was called a Father of his people, it may thereby begathered, that the Sonne was in heauen: from whome & through whom this fatherhood came to men. For men should arrogate too much vnto themselves, if they durst be so bold as bragge, that they were the sonnes of God: but as they are the members of the onely begotten son, where fore it is certaine that the holy fathers had not the assurance of that so honourable a calling. But as they had their confidence in the Sonne, the mediatour. But what profit wee haue by this more perfect knowledge, whereof wee now speake, Paule doth teach vs in an other place. For that now we may freely not onely call, but cry out that God is our Father. Rom. 8. 15. & Gal. 4. 5.

God shall giue vnto him the thronc of Dauid. We haue said that the Angel tooke out of the Prophets these titles, which he giue h vnto Christ, that the holy virgin might thereby know the better, that hee should bee the Redcemer, which was in times past promised vnto the fathers. When as the Prophets do speake of the restitution of the Church, they call the whole hope of the faithfull to the kingdome of Dauid: so that it was a common rule amongst the Iewes, that the safegard of the Church was reposed in the prosper tie of Dauids kingdome. Neither did there any thing more aptly or fitly agree to the office of the Messias, then that he should againe restore the Kingdome of Dauid. And therefore the Messias is sometimes called by the name of Dauid: as in Ier. 30. 9. They shall serue the Lord their God, and Dauid their king: Also in Ezechi 34. 24. and 37. 24. My seruant Dauid shall bee prince amongst them: And in Ose. 3. 5. They shall seeke the Lord their God, and Dauid their king. The places also whereas he is called the son of Dauid, are sufficiently knowne and vnderstood. In summe, the Angell declareth that the Prophecie of Amos 9. 11. of raying the tabernacle of Dauid, which was fallen downe and ouerthrowne, was fulfilled in the person of Christ.

33. *Hee shall raigne ouer the house of Iacob.* Seeing that saluation was peculiarly promised vnto the Iewes, euen as the covenant was made with Abraham their Father: and Christ, as Paule witnesseth, Rom. 15. 8. was a minister of circumcision. the Angell doth not without cause appoint his kingdome in that nation, as if it were the proper seate and abiding

place of the same. But this differeth not from other Prophecies, which doe enlarge & stretch the kingdō of Christ to the vttermost parts of the earth. For God by a new and wonderfull adoption did plant the Gentiles (which before were strangers) into the house of Iacob, so yet that the Iewes as the first borne should hold the principall degree, as it is set downe in the Psalme 110. 1. The Lord shall sende the rod of thy power out of Sion. Therefore the throne of Christ was placed amongst the children of Israell, from whence hee made the whole world subiect vnto him. But as many as are gathered by faith to the sons of Abraham, are accounted as the true Israel. And although the Iewes through their defection seperated themselues from the Church of God, yet the Lords will was, that certaine remnants of them shoulde remaine euen vnto the ende, because that his calling is beyond the power of men. The body of the people in shewe is vtterly cut off. But wee must remember the mysterie whereof Paule speaketh to the Rom. 11. 25. That at length it shoulde come to passe that God woulde gather some of the Iewes from the disperling and scattering abroad. In the meane season the Church which is scattered through the whole worlde, is the spirituall house of Iacob, because she fetched her beginning out of Sion. For euer. The Angell declareth in what sense the perpetuities was so oft promised by the Prophets to the kingdome of Dauid. It flourished only in the times of Dauid and Salomon, in power and riches. Roboam the third successor, scarce held a tribe & a halfe. From that time it ceased not to be shaken with diuers miseries, vntill at length it was broken downe. Now the Angel declareth that when in the person of Christ it shall bee established, that shall not againe be destroyed: & to proue the same, he vseth the words of Daniel, which are set downe 7. 14. *And of his kingdome shall be no end.* Although the sense of the words is, that God is the euerlasting gouernor of the kingdome of Christ and of the Church, so that it shall neuer perish from off the earth, so long as the Sun and Moone shall shine in the heauen, yet the true perpetuities belongeth vnto the glory that is to come. Therefore the faithfull doe so by continuall course some of them succeed others in this life, vntill at the length they bee gathered together into heauen, where they shall raigne without ende.

Luke 1.

Matthew

Marke.

34. Then sayd Mary to the Angell: how shall this be, seeing I know not man?

35. And the Angell answered and said vnto her: the holy Ghost shall come vpon thee, and the power of the most high shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be borne of thee, shall be called the sonne of God.

36. And beholde thy cousin Elizabeth, sheweth also conceived a sonne in her olde age, and this is her sixte moneth, which was called barren.

37. For with God nothinge shall be vnpossible.

38. Then Mary saide, Behold the seruant of the

the Lord, be it done vnto mee according to thy worde:
So the Angell departed from her.

34. *Howe can this bee.* The holy Virgin seemeth as hardly to restrain the power of God, as Zachary did before. For that doth she account to be vnpossible, which is beyond the common order of nature, for thus shee reasoneth. I know no man, howe then shoulde I beleuee that this shoulde come to passe which thou tellest me? It is not needfull that we should greatly labor to cleare her of all fault, for by sayth shee ought to haue risen to the omnipotent power of God, which is not tyed to naturall meanes, but surmounteth the whole world, and yet shee now stayeth in the common course of generation: yet it is to be knowne that shee doth not so doubt or demand, as if shee would haue the power of God made subiect or equall to her senses, but being stricken with a sodaine admiration, shee is onely moued to aske this question. And that shee obediently and gladly receiueth this promise, may be gathered by this: That whereas there were many doubts on the contrary part, shee yet did stay but at this one. Shee might easily haue objected: where is that throane of Dauid become, seeing that all the dignitie of that Empire had now a long time binabolished, & all the glorious beauty of the kingly stocke was extinguished: So that if shee had weighed the matter with the iudgement of the flesh, she should haue taken all that she heard of the Angel but for a fable, wherefore it is not to be doubted, but shee easily gaue place, & was throughly perswaded of the restitution of the church, a thing according to the flesh incredible. And it is probable that the prophesie of Esay 11. 1. was commonly spoken of euery where, whereas God promiseth to raise a grasse to grow out of the contemned stocke of Isay. Faith therefore being through the grace of God conceiued in the vigin minde caused her without doubt to beleuee the message that was brought her of erecting of the throne of Dauid. If any except and say that there was also an other Prophesie, that a virgin should beare a sonne, I answere that the knowledge of that mysterie was as then very darke. The fathers hoped that they should haue a king borne, vnder whom the people of God should bee blessed and happy. But the meane lay hidden from them, as if a vayle had beene put betweene them and it. Therefore it is no marueile that the holy Virgin asketh a question of that shee knoweth not. But that some do imagine of her words, that shee had made a vow of perpetuall virginitie, it is ouer weake and altogether absurd. For then very vnfaithfully had shee done in that shee suffered her selfe to bee bestowed on a husband, and so making a mocke of God, had despised his holy ordinance of matrimonie. Although that in Poperie there had crept in a barbarous tyrannie in this matter of matrimonie, yet they neuer durst go so far, as to permit the wife without the consent of the husband to vow continencie, furthermore, it is a childish inuention to imagine a kind of monkerie amongst the Iews. Yet that obiection is to be answered, that the virgin had respect vnto the time to come, and therefore should signifie that she should not dwell together with her husband. But this coniecture is probable and plaine, that the greatness, or rather the maiestie of the matter did so strike the virgin, that shee had all her senses tyed & bound with admiration. When shee heareth that the Son of God shall bee borne, shee considereth a matter not common, & this is the
reason

reason why shee excludeth the knowledc of man. Thus being amased, shee crieth out, how can this be? Therefore doeth God so gently pardon her, and so louingly and fauourably antwere her: because that hauing Gods workes in admiration, shee did reuerently and soberly demand how that could come to passe, which she was perswaded to be far aboue the common and accustomed course of nature. Furthermore, this question was not against faith, because that it arole rather of an admiration, then of distrust. *The holy Ghost shall come vpon thee.* The Angell doth not so set the maner, as it had been needfull he should haue done, that would satisfie the curiosite of many: But he calleth the Virgin simply to consider the power of the holy Ghost, that with silence and quietly, she might religne her selfe wholly ouer vnto him. The word *to come vpon*, doth signifie that this is an extraordinary worke, wher the means of nature do want. And the next part of the sentence is added to expound the former. *The power of the most high shall overshadowe thee.* For the spirit is as it were the essential power of God, through whose worke he sheweth and exerciseth himselfe, as well in the gouernance of the world as in miracles. There is an apt Metaphore in the word *overshadow*. For the Scripture doth oft compare the power of God (wher with he preserueth and defendeth his) vnto a shadow. But there seemeth to be an other more peculiar sence and vnderstanding of this place: namely that the worke of the spirit should be secret, euen as a cloud set before shoulde itay the eyes of men from seeing. And as in working miracles, God doth keepe secret from vs the counsell of his workes: So it is our partes with modestie to reuerence that which he would haue kept hidden from vs. *Therefore that holy thing that shall be borne.* This is a confirmation of the former sentence, for the Angell teacheth vs, that it behooueth Christ to be borne without the company of man and woman, that he might be holy and the Son of God, that is, that he should not be in a cōmon estate amonst men, but that in holinesse & glory he should excell all creatures. The heretikes which faine, that when he was borne man, and was after made the Sonne of God, doe wrest that causall conjunction, that he should therefore be called the Sonne of God, because that hee was wonderfully conceiued by the power of the holy Ghost, but they reason very wickedly. For although that he was manifested the Sonne of God in flesh, it followeth not but that the word was begotten of the Father before all worlds. Or rather, he the same that was the Sonne of God in his eternall Deitie, appeared also the Sonne of God in his humane fleshe. But this place dooth not onely teach vs the vnite of the person in Christ, but also sheweth that Christ, euen in that he had put on the humane nature, was also the Sonne of GOD. Therefore as the name of the Sonne of God was from the beginning proper to the diuine essence of Christ, so now the Deitie and humanitie ioyned, it agreeth to both the natures together, because that the secret and celestiall working of his generation exempteth him from the common order of men. Of ten also other where as he affirmeth himselfe to be very man, he calleth himselfe the sonne of man. But the veritie of the humane nature is no let but that his diuine generation might procure him a peculiar honor aboue all others: namely in that hee was conceiued by the holy Ghost beyond the ordinarie maner of nature. Of this there groweth a good cause of the assurance of

our sayth, that wee might more boldly call God, Father. For his onely Sonne would needes become our brother, that hee might in common make his father to be also ours. It is also to bee noted, that Christe as hee was conceived by a spirituall power, is called a holy seede. And euen as it was be-hoouefull that hee should be very man, that he might wash away our sinnes, and in our flesh that he might overcome death and Sathan, and that he might so bee a perfecte mediator: so it was necessarie, that he that should purge others from sinne, should be free from all vncleannesse and spotted. Although yet that Christ was borne of the seede of Abraham, yet brought hee no infection out of that corrupt nature, because that the holy Ghost kept him pure and cleane euen from the beginning. Neither that he himselfe alone should excell in holinesse, but also that hee should sanctifie his. Therefore the maner of conception doth testifie that we haue a mediator seperate from sinners.

36. And behold Elizabeth. With an example done at home by her, the Angell doth strengthen the faith of Mary in hope of the myracle. For if neither the barrenesse, nor the old age of Elizabeth could hinder God, but that hee would make her a mother, when shee shall see such a spectacle of Gods power in her owne kinswomā, there is no cause why Mary should still contain her selfe with in the accustomed boundes of nature. He expressly noteth the sixth moneth. For seeing that the woman cōmonly perceiueth in the fifth moneth, that her childe hath life, in the sixth month, she is put out of all doubt: It had bin the part of Mary so to haue credited the simple word of God, that there should haue been no need by any other meanes to strengthē her faith, but least she should wauer any more, the Lorde vseth this new supportation to stay her in his promise. With the s̄ae fauour doth he daily ayd & hold vs vp, yea and as our faith is weaker, so with the more fauour doth he ayd vs. Therefore least that we should doubt of his truth, he gathereth diuers testimonies which may cōfirme the s̄ae vnto vs. It is demanded how the kindred cāe between Elizabeth, which was of the daughters of Aarō, & Mary which was of the stocke of Dauid And also it seemeth to be against the law Num. 36 which forbiddeth women to marry out of their owne tribes. As concerning the lawe, if the ende be considered, it did forbid onely those mariages whereby inheritances may bee mixed. But there was no such danger, if that a woman of the tribe of Iuda was married to a Priest, to whome the inheritance could not be transferred. The s̄me reason was also, if that a woman of the tribe of Leuie was bestowed out of her kindred. And it may bee that the mother of the holy Virgin was of the tribe of Aaron, & that she kindred so came betweene her daughter and Elizabeth.

37. For with God shall no worde bee impossible. If you will vse this phrase *worde* in his proper and natieue signification, then the meaning is that God will performe what so euer hee hath promised, because that there is no let equall with his power. And the argument shall thus bee framed: This hath God promised, therefore hee will performe it. because that no impossibilitie may bee objected against his woorde. But because that woordes according to the phrase of the Hebrew tongue, is oft vsed for a thing or substance, we may more plainly expound it thus, nothing is impossible with God Yet that axiome must bee alwayes holden that they doe penitently wander out of the

the way, which dreame of the power of God besides his word, if any be found: For his omnipotencie is to be considered, so as it may be a foundatiō for the further building of our hope & faith. And now we shall not onely doe very rashly and vnprofitably, but also very perillously, if we dispute what God can do, vnlesse wihall we consider what he will doe. Furthermore, the Angell doth here in this place, as God doth in diuers places of the scripture, for that vnder a generall doctrine, hee confirmeth one especiall promise. And this is the true and right vse of a generall doctrine, if we apply the promises therein set downe, to the present matter, when soeuer we be vexed and troubled: for so long as they be generall and indefinite, they are colde. Furthermore it is not to be maruailed at, that the Angell doth tell Mary of the power of God, for the distrust of his power, doth make vs not to beleue his promises. All men with tongue confesse that God is omnipotent: but if he promise any thing beyond the reach of our capacitie, wee are at a stay. And whereof commeth this? but for that wee will attribute nothing more to his power, then our senses can discern. Therefore Paule to the Rom. 4. 20. commending the faith of Abraham, sayeth that hee gaue the glory to God, because he was able to fulfill what soeuer hee had promised. And in another place when he speaketh of the hope of eternall life, he propoeth the power of God before him. In the 2. Tim. 1. 12. he sayeth I knowe whom I haue beleueed, and I am perswaded that he is able to keepe that which I haue committed vnto him. This seemeth to be but a small portion of faith, and that none, no not the wicked will derogate from God the title of omnipotent: But who soeuer hath the power of God surely and deeply fixed in his heart, hee shall easily overcome all other lets and hinderances of his faith. Yet it is to be noted that the effectuall power of God (if I may so speake) is apprehended in a true faith: For God is mighty, and will be acknowledged, that he may declare himselfe to bee true in deede.

38. *Behold the seruant of the Lord.* The holy virgin will argue and dispute the matter no further, and yet it is not to bee doubted but that there were many things which might hinder her faith, yea, & altogether turne her minde frō the speech of the angel. But she taking the aduantage frō the contrary reasons, enforced her selfe to obedience: & this is a right prooffe of faith, whē we restraine our minds, & hold the as prisoners that they dare not oppose this or that against God: so on the other side liberty to contēd, is the mother of infidelitie: & these words are not of small weight. *Behold the seruant of the Lord,* for the offereth & dediceth her selfe wholly vnto God, that hee may freely vse her according to his owne wil. The vnbeleueers withdrawe themselves frō his hand, & as much as they can, they hinder his worke: But faith doth present vs before God, that we may be ready to obey. Then if the holy virgin was the seruant of the Lord, because that shee obediently submitted her selfe to his gouernement, there is not a worse contempt, the by fleeing to deny him that obedience which hee deserueth & doth require. To bee short as faith only maketh obedient seruants to God, & deliuereth vs into his power: so infidelitie maketh vs rebels and runagates. *Be it done vnto me.* This clause may be expounded two wayes, eyther that the holy Virgin passeth into a prayer and request: or els continuing in the same matter, shee proceedeth in resigning and deliuering her selfe vnto God.

God. I simply interpret it, that shee being perswaded of the power of God, and willingly following whether he calleth, shee doth also subscribe vnto his promise, and so doth not only waite for the effect, but also doth earnestly desire the same. And it is to be noted that shee rested vpon the word of the Angel, because shee knew that it came from God, weighing the dignitie of the same, not of the minister, but of the author.

Luke. 1.

Matthew

Marke.

39. And Mary arose in those dayes, and went in to the hill countrey with hast, to a citie of Iuda.

40. And entred into the house of Zacharias, and salused Elizabeth.

41. And it came to passe, as Elizabeth heard the salutation of Marie, the babe sprang in her bellie, and Elizabeth was filled with the holy Ghost.

42. And shee cryed with a loud voyce, and sayd: Blessed art thou among women, because the fruit of thy wombe is blessed.

43. And whence commeth this to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me?

44. For loe, as soone as the voyce of thy salutation sounded in mine eares, the babe sprang in my belly for ioy.

45. And blessed is shee that beleued: for those things shall be performed, which were told her from the Lord.

39. And Marie arose. This iourney whereof Luke maketh mention, testifieth that Maries fayth was not vnfruitfull, because that Gods promise was not so soone forgotten as the Angell was out of sight, but that remayned fast in her minde. And her hast witnessed her earnest and ardent affection. Heereof it may be gathered, that all other businesse being set aside, the Virgin as it was meete did account of, and preferre this fauour and grace of God. Yet it may be demanded for what purpose shee tooke this iournie. It is certayne that she went not thither only to make search & enquirie, for she nourished the sonne of God as well in her heart by fayth, as conceived in her wombe: neither can I subscribe to the iudgement of some, which thinke that shee went thither to salute her. For it seemeth more probable to me, that partely to increase & to confirme her fayth, partely that they one with an other might set forth the glory of God, was the cause that moued her. And there is no cause why we should account it an absurde thinge, that shee by the sight of a myracle did seeke for confirmation of her fayth, because that it was not in vaine that the Angell did propose the same vnto her. For although that the faithfull are content with the bare and onely worde of the Lord, yet in the meane time they despise not any of his works, which they thinke may any whit preuaile for the supporting of their faith. And especially it behooued Mary to accept this ayde profered her, vnlesse she would haue forsaken that, which the Lord had willingly giuen her. Furthermore the seeing one another, might stirre vp as well her as Elizabeth, to a greater thankfulness, as by the text it appeareth. For the

power

power of God was more euident and notable, in that at oncet they see his grace powred vpon them both, because that comparifon did adde no small light. But Luke doth not declare which was that Citie wherein Zachary dwelt, but only maketh mention that it pertained to the tribe of Iuda, and alfo that it was placed in a hill countrie: whereof is gathered that it was further from the towne of Nazareth, then was Hierufalem.

41. *As ſhee heard the ſaluation.* It is a naturall thing, that the childe in the wombe of a woman great with child, ſhould moue at a ſodaine ioy. But Luke would note vnto vs ſome extraordinary thing. It appertaineth nothing to the matter to entangle our felues in ſubtile queſtions, whether the infante knew that Chriſt was preſent, or whether this was a ſenſe or feeling of godlineſſe. Let this one thing rather ſuffice vs, that the infant leapt by the ſecrete motion of the ſpirit. Neither doth Luke attribute any proper ſenſe to the Infant, but doth rather ſignifie that this was a portion of the worke of G O D in the mother, that the infant ſprang in her wombe, That he ſayth that ſhee was filled with the holy Ghoſt, the meaning is, that ſhe beſides the accuſtomed manner was ſodenly indued with a ſpirite of prophesie, For ſhee was not without the gifts of the ſpirit before, but then the power appeared farre more plentifull and wonderfull.

42. *Bleſſed art thou.* ſhee ſeemeth to place Mary & Chriſt in like degree, which were nothing meete nor conuenient, but I willingly admit their iudgement which thinke that the cauſe of her bleſſedneſſe is rendered in the ſecond parte of the ſentence. For it is oft vſed to put a copulatiue in ſtead of a woorde cauſall, therefore Elizabeth affirmeth that her Couſen is bleſſed becauſe of the bleſſednes of the Son. And although this was not the cheiſe felicity that Mary had, to beare Chriſt in her wombe: nay, this dignity in order came behind that, that ſhee was by the ſpirit of Chriſt borne againe into a new life, yet was ſhee worthily called bleſſed, whom God made worthy this ſingular honour, that ſhee ſhould beare vnto the world his ſonne, in whom ſhee was ſpiritually regenerate. And to this day wee cannot make mention of the bleſſing brought vnto vs thorough Chriſt, but alſo that we muſt remember how honorably the Lord aduanced Mary, in that he would that ſhe ſhould be the mother of his only begottē ſon.

43. *Whence cometh this to me?* This modeſtie is to be noted, that Elizabeth conſidering the great graces of God in Mary, doth giue vnto her that honour that is due, and yet liſteth her no higher (whereby God might bee offended) then was conuenient. For there is ſuch wickedneſſe planted in the world, that there are but few that fall not into one of theſe 2. vices: for ſome pleaſing theſelues too much aboue meaſure, doe maliciously deſpiſe the giftes of God in their brethren, that they alone might be aloft. And there are others which do ſo ſuperſtitiously extoll men, as if they ſhould make idols of them, for them to worſhip. Heereof it came, that they leauing Chriſt, as it were in the lower rowme, did giue the chiefeſt ſeate vnto Mary. Contrariwiſe Elizabeth in praying her, doth not ſo obſcure the glory of God, but rather referreth all thinges to God himſelfe. And yet as ſhee acknowledgeth that G O D hath giuen his grace vnto her, and to others, ſhee enuieth not to giue him the higheſt degree, and modeſtly ſheweth that ſhee hath receiued more then was due to her.

In that shee calleth Mary the mother of her Lord, there is noted the vnitie of the person in two natures, as if shee should haue said: hee which is begotten a mortall man in the wombe of Mary, is also eternall God: for it must be remembered that the simple woman doth not speake of her owne wit, but shee onely vttereth those things which the holy ghost doth teach her. And this name doth properly belong to the Son of God manifested in the flesh, vnto whom all power is giuen of the father, & which was ordained the cheife Prince of heauen & earth, by whose hand God gouerneth all things. Yet he is especially the Lord of the faithfull, who willingly and gladly submit themselves vnder his gouernment: for he is not the head but of his owne bodie. Therefore Paul saith, 1. Cor. 8. 5. Although that many are called Lords in the world, yet vnto vs, that is, to them that are of the hould of faith, there is but one Lord. Furthermore, when shee amplifieth this grace of God whereof she speaketh, by the sodaine motion of the infante which shee bare in her wombe, it is not to bee doubted but that shee would declare that shee felt something supernaturall and diuine.

45. *Blessed is shee that beleueed.* Seeing that it appeareth by that which Luke hath sayd before, that Elizabeth spake by the secret direction of the spirit: it is the same spirit that affirmeth that Mary is blessed because that she beleueed and in praying the fayth of Mary, he generally teacheth vs wherein the chiefe felicitie of men consisteth. Blessed Mary which beleueed in her heart the promise of God, conceived and bare saluation to her selfe and to all the worlde. This was speciall to her. But because that wee haue no drop of righteousness, life, or of any good thing, but as the Lord offereth the same vnto vs in his word there is one faith which pulleth vs from out of extreame pouertie and miserie, and maketh vs partakers of the true felicitie: and there is great waight in this clause: *For those things shall be performed which were sold her.* This is the meaning that faith giueth place to the promise of God, that they may take effecte in vs. And it is certaine that the truth of God doth not depend vpon the will of men, but rather that is true, Rom. 3. 4. That God remaineth alwaies true, although all the world (which is giuen to vnbeleife and lying) should endeouour to weaken and hinder the same. But because that vnbeleeuers are vnworthy to inioy the fruite of the promises, therefore the scripture teacheth, that the same promises are onely by fayth made effectuell to our saluation, for God offereth his benefites generally to all, and sayth openeth her bosome to receiue the same, but vnbeleife suffereth the same to passe by, that they may not once come neare vs. If Mary had beene vnbeleeuing, yet that could not haue hindered the purpose of God, but that he would haue performed his worke, by some other meanes that he would haue liked. But shee is called blessed, because that by fayth shee receiuing the blessing offered her, made the way readie to God for the performance of his worke. So againe vnbeleife shutteth the gate against him, and stayeth his hand from working, least that they should taste the comfort of saluation, which disappoynt him of the glory of his power. Also the relation betweene the word and faith is to be noted, and hereof we learne what it is to beleue: namely, when we subscribe and consent to that which GOD doth speake, and doe certainly assure our selues, that hee will performe that which he hath promised.

The clause *From the Lord*, signifieth as much as the simple doe commonly say on the behalfe or part of God, for the promise was brought by the Angell, but it came from God alone, whereby we gather, that whether God vseth the ministerie of Angels or of men, yet his will is, that there shall no lesse reuerence be giuen to his word, then if he himselte openly should appeare from heauen,

Luke. 1.

Mathew.

Marke.

46. Then Mary sayd, my soule magnifieth the Lord.

47. And my spirite reioyceth in God my sauour.

48. For hee hath looked on the poore degree of his seruant: For behold, from henceforth shall all ages call me blessed.

49. Because hee that is mightie, hath done for mee great things, and holy is his name.

50. And his mercy is from generation to generation, on them that feare him.

Now doth hee set downe and shew the song of the holy Virgine, notable and worthy to bee reported, whereby it playnly appeareth how shee excelled in the gift of the spirite. And there are three partes of this song, for Marie with a solemne thanks giuing, doeth first declare the mercie of God which shee had found in her selfe. Then in generall wordes shee commendeth the power and iudgements of GOD: At length shee applyeth the same to this present matter, where shee speaketh of the redemption promised in times past to the Church, and now performed. *My soule magnifieth*. Here Marie declareth her thankfulness, as we sayd euen now. And because that the hypocrites for the most part do set forth the prayeses of God with full mowthes and no affection of the heart, therefore Mary sayth that shee doth prayse God, euen from the innermost affection of her minde. And truely, they doe nothing else but prophane the holy name of God, which not from their heart, but with the tongue onely doe declare his glory. Furthermore, when as these wordes *Soule* and *Spirite* are diuersly taken in the Scripture, yet when that they come together, they doe signifie two especiall faculties of the soule: for the spirite is taken for the vnderstanding, and the Soule for the seate of affections. That wee may the better vnderstand the minde of the holy Virgine, it is to bee noted, that that is put heere in the second place, which in order ought to be first: for that the will of man might be stirred to prayse God, it is necessary that the reioycing of the spirite shoulde goe before, as Iames teacheth chap. 5. 13. Is any man merry? let him sing, for sorrow and heauinesse do restrain the minde, and also they do hinder the tongue from vttering and declaring the goodnesse of God. Therefore when as the minde of Mary was filled with ioy, her heart brake forth into the prayse of God, and it is not without cause that shee attributeth the epithite of Sauour vnto GOD, when as shee speakes of the ioy of her heart: for vntill that God be knowne as a sauour, the mindes of men are neuer freely nor truely merry, but doe alwayes remaine

maine

maine ambiguous & carefull. Therefore it is the onely fatherly fauour of God, & the saluation which proceedeth frō the same, which filleth vs with ioy. In summe, this is first to be learned, that the faithfull may glory & ioy, that their saluation is in God. Then they ought to follow the next, that they hauing found him a louing father, should giue him thanks. The word *sōteros* doth signifie more in Greeke, then *Seruator* doth in the Latine, euen such a one as doth not onely once deliuer, but is also the author of perpetuall saluation.

48. For he hath looked. She sheweth the cause why she had thee ioy of her heart grounded vpon God, euen because that he of his fauour & loue had looked vpo her, for in that she calleth her selfe poore, she resigneth all worthines from her selfe, & ascribeth the whole cause of her ioy, to the free grace and goodnesse of God, for humilitie in this place (as some vnlearned & ignorāt men haue foolishly thought) doth not signifie submission or modestie, or a habite of the minde, but signifieth a vile estate and an abiect condition, therefore this is the sense. That I was vile & despised, was no hunderance to God, but that he vouchsafed to turne his eyes vnto me. Then if the pouertie of Mary bee opposed to excellencie, (as the matter it selfe declareth, & it plainly appeareth by the Greeke word) we see that Mary casting downe her selfe, doth onely exalt God. And this was not a shew of fained humilitie, but a simple & plaine confession of her thought, which she had engendred in her minde: for as she was of no account in the world, so she did no whit the more esteeme of her selfe. *From hence forth shall call me blessed.* She sayth that this benefite of God shalbe remembred in all ages: And if it were so notable that all men euery where shoulde declare the same, then it was not lawfull for Mary, vpon whom the same was bestowed, to bury the same in silence. But obserue that Mary accounteth nothing of hir owne felicitie, but that she acknowledgeth that it were giuen her from aboue, and thankfully accepteth the grace she hath receiued: I shall (saith shee) bee accounted blessed throughout all ages. Doth she say this, as if shee had obtained this prayse by her owne power or industrie? No, but shee rather dothe commend the onely worke of God: whereby we perceiue how much the Papistes differ from her, for what good thinges soeuer shee had of God, they made small account of, and vnadvisedly they set her forth with their owne vaine inuentions: They abundantly heapte vp together for her magnificall and more then proud titles, as that shee shoulde bee the Queene of heauen, the starre of saluation, the gate of life, the life, the sweetnesse, the hope and the health: yea sathan also carried them so farre into impudencie and madnesse, that they gaue her power ouer Christ for this is their song: Aske the father command thy sonne. Seeing that it plainly appeareth that none of these proceede from the Lorde, the holy Virginne in one woorde abandoneth them all, while shee esteemeth all her glory to be in God his benefites, for if shee bee for this one thing onely to bee renowned, because that GOD hath dealt mightily with her, then there is no place left for those fained titles which they else where haue borrowed. Furthermore, there is nothing more reprochfull to her, then to haue her Sonne spoyled of that which was due to him, and that shee her selfe shoulde be clothed with those sacrilegious spoyles. Now let the papists go, & let them cry that wee are iniurious to

Christes mother : because that reiecting the lyes of men, wee onely set forth the benefites of GOD in her, and wee graunt her that which is most honourable for her, but these preposterous worshippers take it from her. For wee doe willingly receiue her as a teacher, and wee obey her doctrine and her preceptes, and it is not vnknowne what she hath sayde. which the Papistes not regarding, but treading the same, as it were vnder their feete, doe discredit her wordes as much as they canne. But let vs remember that here is a common rule set downe, to be vsed of vs in praying eyther Angels or men : namely that the grace of GOD may bee set forth in them : So also there is nothing to bee prayesd at all, that procedeth not from thence. When she sayth, that God, *that is mighty, hath done great things*, she declareth that God was not holpe with any other ayd, that his only power might the more appeare. Now we must repeate that, which she sayd before, that she was looked vpon, although she was an abiect and contemned. Whereof it followeth, that those prayles of Mary are preposterous and adulterous, in which the power and free fauour of God is not altogether and wholly extolled.

49. *And holy is his name.* This is the second part of the song, wherein the holy Virgin in generall sentences, commendeth the power, iudgements, and mercy of God. And this clause ought not ioyntly in one sentenceto bee read with the former, but aparte. Mary had extolled the grace of God, which shee had found in her selfe, and taking occasion of this, she cryeth out that his name is holy, and that his mercy flourisheth in all ages.

Furthermore, the name of God is called holy, because it deserueth great reuerence, that so oft as there is mention made of God, there shoulde appeare withall a reuerend maiestie of him. The next sentence (wherein the perpetuities of the mercy of God is prayesd) is taken out of the accustomed forme of the covenant, Gen. 17. 7. I will bee thy God, and the God of thy seede after thee for euer. And in Deut. 7. 9. I am God that shew mercy euen to a thousand generations. In which words hee doth not onely shew, that he is alwaies like himselfe, but hee declareth his continuall fauour, which hee beareth towards his: so that euen after their death, he loueth their children & their childrens children, and their whole offspring. So with a continuall course of loue he did shew himselfe to the posteritie of Abraham, because that hee had receiued Abraham into his fauour, he made a league with him for euer. But because that all that come of Abraham after the fleshe, are not in deede the sons of Abraham, therefore Mary restraineth the effect of the promise to the true worshippers of God, as Dauid also doth, Psal. 103. 17. The mercy of the Lord endureth for euer, vpon them that feare him, and his righteousnes vpon childrens children, vnto them that keepe his covenant. God therefore so promisseth, that he will shew himselfe mercifull to the children of his Saints throughout all ages: that so hee may yet take away the occasion of all vaine hope from hypocrites: for they that are degenerate children of his Saints, & haue fallen fro their godlines and faith, do in vaine & rashly glory that God is their father.

Wherefore by this exception their vanitie and pride is ouerthrowne, which are puffed vp with a false pretence of GOD his grace, without sayth.

God made an vniuerfall covenant of saluation with the stocke of Abraham. But as the stones watered with the raine, doe not become softe therewith. so the hardnesse of heart is such a hinderance to the vnfaithfull, that the promised righteousness and saluation cannot enter into them. Yet God, that his promise might be certaine and sure, hath reserved vnto himselfe some seede. By the feare of God is vnderstood all godlines and religion, which cannot be without faith. But here a question may be demaunded, for what cause is God called mercifull, if no man do so finde him, but hee that deserueth his fauour? For if the mercie of God be vpon them that feare him, then godlinesse and a good conscience doe procure his fauour to men: and so by this meanes men should by merits preuent his grace. I answere that this also is a portion of his mercie, that God planteth a feare and a reuerence of him in the children of the godly. For he doth not meane heere the beginning of grace, as if they should imagine that God were idle, and should looke downe from heauen to espie who they were that were woorthy of the same, but he onely driueth the hypocrites from their pieuis security, least that they should think they had God bound to them, because that they according to the flesh, are the children of godly parents, when that the end of God his covenant is far otherwise and the condition much contrary, namely this: Hee will haue a people alwaies in the world, of whom he will be purely worshipped.

Luke. 1.

Matthew

Marke.

51. Hee hath shewed strength with his arme, hee hath scattered the proud in the imagination of their hearts.

52. He hath put downe the mightie from their seates and exalted them of lowe degree.

53. He hath filled the hungrie with good things and sent away the rich emptye.

54. He hath witholden Israell his seruauant, being mindefull of his mercie.

55. As he hath spoken to our fathers, to wit, to Abraham and his seede for ever.

51. He hath shewed strength. Is as much as if he should haue sayd, hee hath wrought mightily, and the arme of God is opposed against all other helpes, as in Esa. 59. 16. God looked and there was none to helpe. Therefore his arme did saue it, and his righteousness it selfe did sustaine it. This then is the meaning of Mary, that God was satisfied with his owne power, and had no fellowes in his worke, and called none to helpe him. That which presently is spoken of the proude, seemeth to bee added for two causes, partly because that the proude which endeuour after the maner of Gyants to striue against God doe nothing preuaile: and also because that God doth not stretch forth the power of his arme, but for the sauegard of the lowly, and that he might overthrow the proude, which arrogantly take too much to themselves. And to that purpose belongeth that exhortation of Peter, 1. Pet. 5. 6. Humble your selues vnder the mighty hand of God. The maner of speach is also to be noted. Hee scattereth the proud in the imagination of their hearts. For (as their pride & ambition is great, so is their couetousnes insatiable) in their deuises, they heap together as it

were a great mountaine, and that I may speake one word, they build the tower of Babel: for they being not satisfied in that they haue foolishly attempted this or that about their strength, they forthwith heape newe consultations of madde presumption to their former deuices: when God for a while hath with silence from heauen lughed at their notable purposes, then at a sodaine hee disperseth & ouerthroweth their whole heape, as if a man should pull downe a building, which before was strongly and soundly built and compacte together, and should dispearce the same farre off into diuerse places.

Hee hath put downe the mightie. If you translate it Princes, the sense will bee the plainer: For although that *dynastai*, are so called of the Greeks by reason of their power, yet they are interpreted gouernours and cheite magistrates. But many haue thought this word mightie, to bee a Participle. Mary sayeth that they shall bee pulled out of their thrones, that the vnknowne and simple may bee lifted into their places. So that which prophane men doe call the place of Fortune, shee doth attribute to the iudgements and prouidence of God. Yet we must know that there is not giuen to God an absolute power, as if he should by a tyrannous authoritie tosse and turne men hither and thither as balles, but a most right and iust gouernement, and hath a notable reason for what soeuer he doth, though it be often hid from vs: for sodaine chaunges doe not please God, as that hee should in a mockerie lift them vp aloft, whome hee had determined sodainely to throw downe, but rather the wickednes of men doth turne and alter the estate of things, because that no man acknowledgeth that the estate of euery man is in the will and hand of God. But they that are placed aboue others, do not onely contumeliously and cruelly handle their neighbours, but also most sharply doe they deale against the authour of their situation. Therefore some are lifted vp into high degree of honour, and some are slipte downe, or rather cast downe headlong out of their thrones, that wee indeede might learne, that what soeuer thing is aloft and exalted in the worlde, is subiect to God, and that all the world, is vnder his gouernement. Dauid declarerh the cause and end of these changes, Psal. 107. 20 and also Dan 2. 21.

Wee see how the Princes of the worlde become arrogant without measure how they runne into luxuriousnesse, how they swell in pride, and howe the sweetenesse of prosperitie hath made them drunken. It is not to be wondered at, if God cannot beare with such vnthankfulnesse, and this is the cause why for the most part their state is not durable, whom God hath lifted vp on high. And againe, the glory of Kings and Princes, doeth so amaze the common sort of men, that few there bee that thinke there is any God about them. But if that Princes brought their scepters with them from their mothers wombe, or that the continuance of their kingdomes were perpetuall, then all knowledge of God, and of his prouidence, would presently vanish away. The Lord therefore placing the low aloft, hee leadeth the pride of the world as prysoner in his triumph, and with all hee teacheth his simplicitie and modestie.

Now wee knowe why Mary sayde, that it is GOD that throweth the Princes from their thrones, and exalteth the lowly: namely, that he might teach vs that the worlde is not turned and rowled by the blinde force of Fortune.

Fortune, but what chaunges so euer are seene, they all come to passe by the prouidence of God: and also that God himselfe with great equitie doth gouerne those things which seeme to trouble & peruert the whole order of the worlde. The which thing the more fully confirmeth in the next vers. He that filled (saith he) the hungry with good things, & sent away the rich empty. Hereby we gather that alterations please not God of themselves, but for another cause: That is, because that the great ones, & the rich, and the mighty, being puffed vp with their fulnes, do challenge all things to themselves, & leaue nothing to God himselfe. wherefore we must diligently take heed that we be not carryed away with prosperity, we must also beware of the vnconstant fulnes of the flesh, least that God sodenly make vs empty. But this doctrine, that God filleth the hungry with good things, bringeth great comfort to the godly, which feele their owne poerty: and as though they were hungerstarued, doe sigh vnto God.

54. *Hee hath vpholden Israell.* In this last parte, Marie doeth apply these generall sentences to the present purpose. And the summe is, that God now performeth the saluation, which in times past was promised to the holy Fathers.

But first there is an apte Metaphore in the worde *vpholden*, for the estate of the people was so throwne downe, that amongst the most there was no hope left that it might be againe restored, therefore it is said that Israel is vpholden, because that God with his outstretched hand raised it vp, it beeing throwne prostrate, and lying vnder seete. Religion was desired many wayes, in the publicke doctrine there was left almost nothing sound.

The gouernement of the Church beeing wholly confused, did breath out nothing else but cruell barbarousnesse: The polliticke order was vtterly ouerthrowne, the Romaines and Herode as sauage beastes, did rend in peeces the body of the people: So much more notable was their restitution, for that it was then when all things beeing ouerthrowne, not lawfull for them to hope after it.

Heere he vseth the name of childe, which may as well be vnderstoode a seruant, as a sonne, but to take it for a seruant is most apte. And Israell in this place (as in many others) is called the seruant of God, because that hee was received into the houshold of God.

Being mindfull. Mary sheweth the cause why this people ready to fall into ruine, was received of GOD: nay why God raysted them vppe, being nowe all ready fallen downe, because that in preserving the same, he might shew a token of his mercy, yea in woorde expressly he declareth that God was mindefull of his mercy whereof hee might haue seemed to haue beene somewhat forgetfull, seeing that he suffered his people to be so miserably vexed and afflicted: for it is commonly vsed to attribute affections to God, euen as in their causes men thinke him either to be angry or to be mercifull vnto them. And because that mens mindes cannot conceiue the mercy of God, but as the same is offered and testified to vs in his woorde: here Mary calleth her selfe and others to the promisses, and teacheth that GOD is saythfull and constant in performing the same.

In this sense God is often called louing and true : because that wee can neuer account of his fatherly goodnesse towards vs: but that wee must also remember his worde, by which band he bindeth himselfe vnto vs, & the same being put in the middle, he knitteth our saluation with the goodnes of God, with a knot that cannot be vnknit. But in the same wordes doth Mary shew, that the couenant which God made with the fathers in times past w^s of his free grace for there she fetcheth the promised saluation out of the meere mercy of God, as out of a fountaine : and hereof we gather that she was well exercised in the doctrine of the scripture. The Messias was then commonly looked for : but there were but few which had their faith grounded vpon so sincere a knowledge of the scripture.

55. *To Abraham and to his seede.* If thou readest it ioyntly, the chaunging of the case seemeth to be absurd: for then thou shouldst rather haue vsed the accusatiue case, then the ablatiue, but in my iudgement there is no simple apposition: because that Mary doth not onely declare who those fathers were, to whom God spake, but she sheweth that the force and effect of the promises doth reach to all the posteritie, if they be of the true seed of Abraham. Whereof it also followeth to be vnderstood, that Mary speaketh of the solemne couenant, which was specially made with Abraham and his house. For there were other promises, which were made to Adam, to Noah, and to others, which generally did belong to all the Gentiles. But as vnbeliefe did cut off many fleshly children of Abraham, and because they were degenerate, they were altogether estranged from the house of Abraham : so wee, which were strangers, being grafted in by fayth, are to bee accounted the true seede of Abraham. Let vs therefore holde, that God in times past so spake to the fathers, that his grace which hee offered vnto them should also appertaine to them that came after, and also he hath adopted all the Gentiles, that by faith they might become the spirituall children of Abraham, which by nature were not.

Luke 1.

Matthew

Marke.

56. And Mary abode with her about three monethes: after she returned to her owne house.

57. Now Elizabeths time was fulfilled, that she should be deliuered, & she brought forth a sonne.

58. And her neighbours & cosines heard tell, how the Lord shewed his great mercy vpon her, and they reioyced with her.

59. And it was so, that on the eight day they came to circumcise the babe, and called his name Zacharyas, after the name of his father.

60. But his mother answered and said, not so: but hee shall be called Iohn.

61. And they sayd vnto her, there is none of thy kinned, that is named with this name.

62. Then they made signes to his father, how he would haue him called.

63. So hee asked for writing Tables, and wrote, saying: his name is Iohn, and they marvelled all.

64. And his mouth was opened immediately, and his tongue loosed, and he spake, and praised God.

65. Then feare came on them that dwelt neere vnto them, and all these wordes were noised abroade throughout all the hill countrey of Iudea.

66. And all they that hearded them, layde them vp in their hearts, saying, what manner childe shall this bee, and the hande of the Lorde was with him.

The summe of this historie is, that the natiuitie of Iohn became famous through diuers myracles of God, which promised some great and singular thing (in time to come) of that infant. For it was the will of God to set him tooth with these rare tokens from his mothers wombe, least that afterwards, as an vnknowne person, or as one of the common sorte, hee shoulde goe forth to execute the office of a Prophet. First, Luke declareth, that Mary was almost three monethes with her cosine, euen vnto the day of her deliuerance: for it is probable, that there was no other cause of her tarrying, but that shee might enioy the sight of the heauenly grace, which the Angell tolde her of, for the confirmation of her fayth.

58. And her neighbours and cosines. It may bee doubted whether these men esteemed the great grace of God of the only blessing of bearing a child, or whether they had heard before that an Angel had appeared to Zachary, which had promised him a sonne. Certainly this was no small benefit of God, that a barren woman, whose course of age was now past, should beare a child beyond the order of nature. Therefore it may be, that for this so great a cause, they extolled the greatnes of the goodnes of God: Furthermore, on the eight day (as the custome was) for duty & humanity sake, they came together. But this occasiō doth God vse, that he might make them witnesses & beholders of his power, and of his glory. And it is not to be doubted, but that there came a greater concourse of the people, because of the extraordinary birth: for they accounted it as a wonder, to see an old and barren woman suddenly to become with childe. And now, when the childe was borne, the wonder was renewed and increased. We gather by the words of Luke, that although they circumcised their children at home: yet they did it not without a concourse & an assembly of men: and that not without a cause, for seeing that it was a publike sacramēt of the church, it ought not to bee admittred secretly or priuately.

59. They called him after the name of his father. Wee knowe that in the beginning names were giuen to men, eyther of the euent of things, or else by propheticall instinctiō, to declare and note some secrete worke of God. But after in proesse of time, when there was more store of names, so that conueniently they coulde not daily inuent newe, they beeing content with

their old & accustomed names, called their childrē by the names of their aunc-
cesters. So there were many Zacharyes before Iohn his father, and it may bee
that he came of the sonne of Barachias. And we know, that most cōmonly that
is holden for a law, which is receiued into vse & custome. Therefore these men
strue, that their custome might be obserued in naming of the child. But as there
is no religion to be put in names, so no wise men will deny the faithfull in this
behalf, to make a godly and fit choise: that they may giue their children such
names as may teach them & admonish thē of their duties. Furthermore, let thē
borrow the names of the holy fathers (that so they may prouoke their children
to follow their examples) rather then take them from prophane men.

60. *His mother answered.* It is vncertaine, whether that Elizabeth was
also taught of an Oracle: But it is most like, that when Zacharyas saw him-
selfe punished for his slacknesse to beleue, that hee tolde h s wife by writing
that, which the Angell had giuen in commandement as concerning his name:
for that otherwise shee woulde not haue obeyed the commandement of God.
Why also this name was giuen to the Baptist from aboue, I haue before decla-
red. The kinsfolkes although they knew not the cause, yet they are moued
with the newnesse of the thing, especially because that they suppose that this is
not vnaduisedly done.

64. *His mouth was opened.* God renowneth the birth day of his Prophet
by restoring the tongue to the father. And it is not to bee doubted, but that
this benefit was differred to this day, for this ende and purpose, that he might
turne mens eyes vpon Iohn. It is sayd that Zacharyas prayd God, not on-
ly that hee might declare his thankfulness, but that his kinsfolke and neigh-
bours might know that this punishment was layde vpon him, because that he
was so slacke to beleue. And hee was not ashamed with his owne reproach,
to declare and set forth the glory of G O D. So it is euery where knowne to
all men, that there is a childe borne not at aduenture, or after the common
order, but promised by heavenly Oracle.

65. *Then feare came on them all.* This feare whereof Luke maketh men-
tion in this place, sprang of the feeling of Gods power: For the workes of
God are with such reuerence to be considered, that they may earnestly moue
vs. For God playeth not with his myracles, but he stirreth vp the senses of men,
which otherwise he perceiue to be slow and dull. And Luke sayth that this
same was spread abroad throughout all the hill country of Iudea. Although
that many tooke no profit by it (yet they were for a time touched with the pow-
er of God) for when that Iohn began to execute his office, few did remem-
ber how wonderfull his natiuitie was. But God woulde that the same of these
things should be spread abroad, not for their sakes onely that heard the same,
but that the myracle might be of more credit in al ages after, which was thē so
famous in euery place: yet as in a looking glasse we may here set before our eyes
the cōmon vnthankfulnes of man. For when as vaine and foolish thinges are
fast fixed in our mindes: the remembrance of the graces of God, which
ought alwayes to bee fresh in memory is presently let passe and forgotten.
Luke speaketh not of blockish men, or of brutish contemners of God, for hee
sayth that they layde vpe these thinges in their heart, that is, they were di-
ligent

ligent to consider these things. And it is probable that some at the time remembered these matters; but the greater part had shortly after cast off this reverent feare, which they had conceaued: Yet it is to be noted, that they did not digresse from the purpose, which referred these miracles which they saw to the excellencie, which should in time to come be found in the childe: for such was the counsell of God, as wee haue sayd, that Iohn shoulde not after come abroad without singular commendation. In that Luke sayth that the hand of God was with him, this is the meaning: The grace of God was euident so many wayes, which openly declared that hee was not a common man. It is a figuratiue speech, which affirmeth that the power of God was as plainly shewed, as if the hand of God had beene openly seene, that euery man might readily discern that God was present.

Luke. 1.

Matthew

Marke.

67. Then his father Zacharias was filled with the holy Ghost, and prophesied, saying.

68. Blessed be the Lord of God Israel, because hee hath visited and redeemed his people.

69. And hath rayssed vp the horne of saluation to vs in the house of his seruant Dauid:

70. As hee spake by the mouth of his holy prophets, which were since the world began, saying:

71. That he would send vs deliuerance from our enemies, and from the hands of all that hate vs:

72. That he would shew mercie towardes our fathers, and remember his holy covenant.

73. And the oath which he sware vnto our father Abraham: that he would grant vs.

74. That we being deliuered out of the hands of our enemies, might serue him without feare

75. All the dayes of our life in holinesse and righteousness before him.

67. Zacharias was filled with the holy Ghost. But a little before it is shewed what this maner of speech meaneth: that is, that the seruantes of God are indued with more abundant grace of the spirite, the which they yet were not without before. We reade that the spirite was giuen to the Prophets, not that they were at other times without the same, but because that the power of the spirit did more plentifully and fully shew it selfe in them, as oft as they (as it were by the hand of God) were brought into the light, to execute their office. Therefore this knitting together of those two clauses, which Luke vseth, is to be obserued, that he was filled with the holy Ghost, and prophesied. For it signifieth that he was then inspired from aboue more then ordinarily, so that hee spake not after the fashion of men, as a priuate man, but that he spake onely heauenly doctrine. So Paul ioyneth prophesie and the spirit together, 1. Thess. 5. 19. Quench not the spirite, despise not prophesie, that we might knowe that by the contempt of doctrine, the light of the spirite is extinguished.

But this goodnes of God is worthy to be remembered, that Zacharias had

not

not only the vse of his speech restored to him againe, which for nine moneths hee wanted, but also his tongue was made an instrument of the holy Ghost.

68. *Blessed bee the Lord.* Zachary beginneth with thanks giuing, but with a propheticall spirite he setteth forth the accomplished redemption, promised before time in Christ, whereof the saluation and felicitie of the church did depend: why hee shoulde bee called the God of Israell, vnder whole gouernement the whole world is subiect, it doth better appeare by the texte: namely, for that the redeemer was specially promised to the seede of Abraham: Because that G O D hath made his couenaunt onely with one people and nation, whereof Zachary was now about to speake. For good cause therefore doth hee expressly name the name of that people, to whome the grace of saluation properly, or at least principally was sent and appoynted. There is vnder this visiting a secret opposition, because that the countenance of God, for a time, was turned from the wretched children of Abraham: for they were fallen into that calamitie, and ouerwhelmed with so great a heape of mischeifes, that no man would haue thought that God had any regard vnto them. Furthermore, this visitation of God, whereof Zachary mentioneth, is put as the cause and the beginning of the redemption: Therefore resolue it thus, God looked vpon his people, that hee might redeeme them. And seeing that they were prysoners, which God redeemed, and that this kinde of redemption was spirituall: we thereof gather, that euen the holy Fathers were not free from the yoke of sinne and the tyranny of death, but thorough the grace of Christ: For Christ is sayd to be a redeemer sent, euen to the holy and elect people of G O D. But if redemption was but then at length brought of Christ, when as he appeared in the flesh: It followeth that the faultfull, which were dead before his coming, were all their life time seruants of sinne & of death, which were a great absurdity. I answer that the force and effect of this redemption, which was once giuen in Christ, was common in all ages.

69. *He hath rayfed vp a horne of saluation.* That is a power to saue. For the throane of Dauid being throwne downe, and the people being disperfed, the hope of saluation in outward shew was also fallen away. And surely Zachary alludeth to the propheties of the Prophets, in the which there is promised a sodaine restitution, when that all things with them were in greatest miserie & destruction. And this sentence is taken out of the Psalm. 132. 17. where it is sayd: There will I make the horne of Dauid to budde, for I haue ordayned a light for mine annoynted. If that God doth shew his power to saue vs in no other meanes, but in Christ, then it is a most haynous offence to bow from him any way, if that wee hope to bee saued from aboue. But obserue, that that is a horne of saluation to the faythfull, which to the wicked is terrible: so that disperfeth them, or rather overthroweth them, and beatech them to dust. Hee calleth Dauid the seruant of God, not simply, because he worshipped God as euery one of the elect doe: but in an other respect, namely that hee was chosen his minister, to gouerne and to preserue his people, that he and his successors should represent the person and offices of Christ. And although there was then no shewe of a kingdome left among the Iewes: yet because that Zachary reposeth himselfe in the promises of G O D, he doubteth

not to call Dauid the seruant of God, in whom God shewed a token of saluation that was to come. Whereof it followeth that Christe is then in deede constituted as the authour of our saluation, when that there is a throne set vp for him amongst vs, from the which he may gouerne vs.

70. *As hee spake.* Least for the newnesse of it, the saluation shoulde be doubted of, which hee sayth was brought by Christe, hee citeth all the Prophetes, as witnesses of the same. which being raysed vp in diuers times, doe yet teach with one consent, that wee must hope for saluation from Christe alone. And this is not the onely purpose of Zachary, to praise the fayth and constancie of G O D, because that he performeth and fulfilleth, that which he before in times past hath promised: But his minde is rather to call the faithfull to the olde Prophetes, that with the more certeintie and readines, they might imbrace the saluation offered them, whereof all the Prophetes from the beginning witnessed. For truly our faith in Christ is established vpon a sure staye, when as it commeth forth confirmed with the testimonies of all the Prophetes. Hee calleth the Prophetes holy, that thereby their wordes might haue the greater authoritie and reuerence, as if hee shoulde haue sayd, they are not light or common, but approoued witnesses, yea they are set forth by publike commandement, as if that from heauen they were called for this purpose from the common sort of men. But in small and seuerall perticular poyntes, to discusse how that all the Prophetes did witness of Christe, it would bee too long. Let this suffice for this time (sith it is knowne to all men, that the people coulde not bee otherwise brought to beleue that God woulde be mercifull to them any otherwise, but by bringing in that couenant which was established in Christ) that he plainly speaketh of the redemption to come, as it was reuealed in Christ. Hether belong many notable places, which do very plainly prophesie of Christ, and shew him forth, as it were with a finger. But especially that seale of the conuauent of God is to be remembered, the which if any man neglect, he shall neuer vnderstand any thing in the Prophetes, as the Iewes miserably wandred in reading of the scripture: for that they being onely curious in wordes, they strayed farre from the purpose.

71. *Deliverance from our enemies.* Zachary doth more plainly set forth the power and office of Christ. And truly it would profit vs little or nothing to heare that Christ was giuen vs, except wee also knew what good he brought vs. For this cause therefore hee doth more fully teach to what end the horne of saluation was erected, euen that the faithfull might be preserved from their enemies. It is not to be doubted but that Zacharias knew well ynough, that the greatest warre that the Church of God hath, is not with flesh and bloude, but with Sathan and all his retinue, wherewith he doth deceitfully deuise the destruction of vs all. And although that outwarde enemies doe also molest the Church, and that it is deliuered from them by Christ. yet seeing that the kingdom of Christ is spirituall, this sentence is spoken especially of Sathā, the prince of this worlde, and of his powers. Againe the miserable condition of men without Christ is here noted, that is: that they lye prostrate vnder the tyranny of the deuil: for otherwise Christ could not deliuer his children out of his handes that is, from his power. Yet this place doth declare, that the Church

Church especially liueth amongst her enemies, while shee remaineth in this worlde, and is alwayes in daunger of their violence, if Christe were not present to helpe. But this is the inestimable grace of Christ, that our saluation remaineth certaine and safe, although our enemies do compasse vs on euery side. And although it is a hard speech, when hee saith that hee will send deliuerance from our enemies, yet the sense is not hard, because that no deuises of our enemies, or strengthes, no deceites, no forces can hinder God, but that hee deliuering vs from them, will perpetually preferue vs.

71. *That he would shew mercy.* Zachary doth teach vs againe from whence this redemption cometh, euen from the mercy of God, & from the covenant of his free grace. For he declareth the cause why it pleased God to saue his people: euen because he was mindfull of his covenant hath he shewed his mercy. And he is said to be mindfull of his couenāt, because that his so long delaying might seeme to be a certaine forgetfulnesse: for hee suffered the people afflicted with most grievous mischiefes to languish. This order is diligently to bee obserued, that God was lead of his own meere mercy, to make the covenant with the fathers: Then he hauing made the covenant, he was bound by his word to performe the saluatiō of men. Thirdly, that what thing soeuer is good, he giueth it in Christ, that so hee might sanctifie all his promises, that so the faith of them should bee no otherwise established, but when the fulnesse shoulde appeare in Christ. There is promised in the covenant forgiveness of sins, but the same is to be had in the blood of Christ: there is promised righteousness, but the same is giuen by the satisfactiō of Christ: there is promised life, but it is not to be sought but in the death & resurrection of Christ. And this is the cause why God commanded in times past, that the booke of the law also should be sprinkled with the blood of the sacrifice. It is also worthy to be obserued, that Zachary extendeth to the fathers that are dead, the mercy which was shewed in his age, that they al in common might receiue the fruite of the same. For hereof it followeth that the grace & power of christ cannot be contained within the straites of this fraile life, but that it is eternal: And it cannot be ended by the death of the flesh, seeing that both the soules are free from death, and also that a resurrection doth follow the destruction of the flesh. As therefore neither Abraham, nor any of the Saintes coule by their owne power or merits obtaine saluation for themselves: so there is a common saluation shewed forth in Christ to al the faithfull, as well to them that are dead, as to them that are aliue.

73. *According to the oath.* The preposition is not expresse in the Greeke, but it is sufficiently knowne, that it is the common vse of that tongue, when the nowne is put in the accusatiue case, without a word to gouerne it, that the preposition is to bee vnderstood, whereof it may bee gouerned. He maketh mention of his oath, that hee might the better set forth howe sure and holy his truth is: for God doth so much submit himselfe to our capacitie, that hee vouchsafeth to vse his name as a stay and helpe of our infirmitie: wherefore if the bare promise do not suffice vs, let vs yet remember this confirmation, and if that take not all doubt from vs, wee are too vnthankfull to God, and iniurious to his holy name.

That hee would giue vs. Zachary doth not declare what the covenant of God

God doeth containe in all and euery of the particular pointes of the same. But he teacheth for what purpose God in his mercie dealt so louingly with his people, when he redeemed them, that is, that they being redeemed, should addict and vow themselves wholly to worship the authour of their saluation. Therefore as the free goodnes of God is the efficient cause of mans saluation: so the small cause is, that men by liuing a godly and a holy life, might glorifie the name of God: the which is diligently to be noted, that wee beeing mindefull of our calling, might learne to referre the grace of God to his true vse. These sentences (I say) are to be considered, that we are not called to vncleanes, but to holines, that wee are redeemed with a great price, not that we should be seruants to the desires of the flesh, or that we should runne on in vnbridled libertie, but that Christ might reigne in vs: that wee by adoption are placed into the household of God, that we againe, as children, should obey our father. For Tit 2. 11. In this appeareth the goodnes of God, & *Philantropia*, that denying worldly lustes, we should liue soberly, righteously, and godly. Therefore Paul in the Ep. Rom. 12. 1. when that he would effectually exhort the faithful, that in newnes of life they should offer vp themselves vnto God, and that by putting off the olde man, and forsaking the former minde, they should giue vnto him a reatonable seruice, he proposeth vnto them the bowels of the mercy of God. The scripture is full of such testimonies, which declare that the grace of Christ is made of no effect, if we bend not to this purpose. But it is to be noted, that he sayth, that we should serue him without feare: For it signifieth that GOD cannot be rightly serued, but with quiet settled mindes: for they which are not perswaded, but are in doubt with themselves, whether they shall finde him mercifull or offended, whether hee accepteth their obedience or refuseth the same: to be short, they which vncertainly wauer betweene hope and feare, it may be that sometimes they carefully busie themselves in seruing him, but they neuer submit themselves sincerely, and from the heart vnto him: for feare and doubtfulness cause them to abhorre him: so that, if it were possible, they would rather wish that his Godhead were extinguished. But wee know that no sacrifice is acceptable to God, but that which commeth of a free will, and which is offered with a glad heart. Wherefore, that men may worship aright, it is necessary that their consciences be first quieted: as Dauid saith, psal. 130. 4. Mercie is with thee, that thou maiest be feared. For God hauing giuen peace to men, doth cal the louingly to him, & causeth them to come gladly, and with a free & bold affectiō to worship him. And hereof doth Paul gather that sentence: what soeuer is not off faith, is sin. Ro. 14. 23. For seeing that god hath reconciled men to himselfe in his son Christ, seeing he defendeth the by the aid of the same his Son, that they might be without all feare, & seeing he hath laid vp their saluation in his hand & keeping, Zachary hath good cause to say, that by his grace we are deliuered frō feare. Therefore the Prophets ascribe this as a property to his kingdom, that men should haue a certain peace, & should enjoy most quiet ioy.

75. *In holinesse and righteousness.* As God hath comprehended in two tables the rule of liuing well: So Zachary doeth shew heere, that wee haue then serued GOD according to his law, when as our life is framed to holines and righteousness, For it is not to be doubted, but that holinesse doth containe those

hose duties of godlines, which belong to the first table of the law: And of this thing Plato was not ignorant, and righteousnes extendeth to all the duties of charitie. For God requireth nothing else of vs in the second table, but that we should giue to euery man, that which is his due.

There is added, *before him*. That the saythfull may know, that it is not sufficient for them to gouerne their life well, or that they keepe their hands, their feete, and their whole body from all sinne before the sight of men: for it be- houeth them to liue to the iudgement of God, who is not satisfied with an outward holinesse, but he especially beholdeth the heart. Last of all, least any man thinke that he hath done this dutie, when he hath serued God for a small time, Zachary sayth that they were redeemed of this condition, that they should spend their whole life in indeuouring to serue God. And seeing that our redemption is eternall, it is our dutie neuer to forget it. And seeing God adopteth vs vnto himselfe for euer, our thankfulness ought not to be transitory, or for a smal time: to be short, seeing that Christ died, and rose againe for them, it is conuenient that he should be Lord both of their life and death: Therefore Paul in that place which I cited a litle before, commaundeth vs to lead a holy and a righteous life, vntill the comming of the mightie God, looking for (sayth he) the blessed hope, &c.

Luke. 1

Matthew

Marke.

76. And thou babe, shalt be called the Prophet of the most high: for thou shalt goe before the face of the Lord, to prepare his wayes:

77. And to giue knowledge of saluation, vnto his people, by the remission of their sinnes.

78. Through the tender mercie of our God: where by the day spring from on high hath visited vs.

79. To giue light to them that sit in darkenesse, and in the shadow of death, and to guide them into the way of peace.

80. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirite, and was in the wildernesse till the day came, that hee should shew himselfe vnto Israell.

76. And thou childe. Zachary returneth againe to the commendation of the grace of Christ: but hee doth this, as it were vnder the perion of his owne sonne, briefly setting forth the office of teaching, for the which he was prepared and appoynted. And although that hee coulde not yet discern any propheticall giftes in the litle childe, being but eight dayes old, hee yet turning his eyes to behold the counsaile of God, doth speake as of a thing perfectly knowne. To be called a Prophet of God, is in this place taken for to be accounted, and to be openly knowne. The secret calling of God was gone and passed before, it onely rested that it should be made knowne vnto men what he was: But because that the name of a prophet is generall, therefore by the reuelation brought vnto him by the Angell, he is appoynted to be the forerunner of Christ.

Thou

Thou shalt goe before the face of the Lord (sayth hee:) That is, this office thou must vndertake, that by thy preaching thou maiest turne men to heare the Lorde. But why Iohn, when he had almost ended his course, denied that hee was the Prophet of God, it is declared in that place in Iohn: And wee shall heereafter see what maner of preparing of a way this is, whereof Zachary here speaketh.

77. *To giue knowledge of saluation.* Zachary now toucheth the cheife poynt of the Gospell, in that hee teacheth that the knowledge of saluation is put in the forgiuenes of sinnes. For seeing that by nature wee are borne the children of wrath, it followeth that by nature wee are condemned and lost: and this is the cause of our damnation, that wee are guiltie of vnrighteousnesse: wherefore there is no other way, whereby wee may escape death, except that God should reconcile vs to himselfe, by not imputing or laying our sinnes to our charge. And it is easily gathered out of the words of Zachary, that this is the onely righteousness that remayneth for vs before God: For whereof commeth saluation, but of righteousness? And if that it be not lawfull for the children of God to acknowledge any other saluation, then through forgiuenes of sinnes, it followeth that righteousness cannot any other where be sought: so the righteousness (which proude men haue forged and framed to themselves, of the merites of workes) is nothing else but imputation of righteousness, whilst that God freely absolueth vs from the guiltines of sinne. Moreover it is to bee noted, that Zachary speaketh not of strangers, but of the people of god: whereof it followeth, that not only the beginning of righteousness doth depend vpon forgiuenes of sinnes: but that the faith vll also are by imputation or imputatiuely (that I may so speake) righteous before God, euen vntill the end: because that otherwise they cannot stand before his tribunall seate, except that dayly they haue recourse to the free reconciliation in his grace.

78. *Through the tender mercie.* In this so great a benefite, Zachary as it is requisite, doth set forth the mercy of God: and hee was not content to call it simply, the saluation which was brought vs through Christ, but he sayth that it came out of the tenderesse or very bowels of Gods mercie, the which is more forcible. Afterwardes hee metaphorically addeth, that through the great mercie of God it came to passe, that the day gaue light to them that late in darkenesse. *Oriens.* (i. the day springing) in this place is not a participle: for in greece it is *anatole*, that is the coast where the sunne riseth, to the which the fall is opposed. Therefore Zachary extollet the mercie of God in this, that the darkenes of death being shaken off, the light of life was restored to the people of God. In this maner it becommeth vs, as oft as we speake of our saluation, to lift vp our minde to the mercie of God. It seemeth to be an allusion to the 4. chap. 2. v. of Mal where Christ is called the sunne of righteousness, hauing health vnder his winges, that is carying it in his beames. For the wordes *light* and *darkenesse*, there are thelike in Esa. 9. 2. The people that walked in darkenes haue seene a great light, they that dwelled in the lande of the shadow of death, vpon them hath the light shined: And in many other places are those wordes vsed. But by these wordes wee are taught that there is no light of life in the world without Christ, but that all thinges are covered with the most horrible darkenes of death. Therefore in an other place

Esay doth testifie that this is proper to the Church alone. Beholde (sayth he) darkenesse shall couer the earth, and grosse darknesse the people: but the Lord shall arise vpon thee, and his glory shall bee seene vpon thee, Chap. 60. 2. Yet it is demanded how the Israelites sate in the shadow of death, whose heartes the Lord alwayes lightened through faith. I answer, that the godly, which liued vnder the law, being on euery side compassed with the darkenes of death, did behold light a farr off in the comming of Christ, wherewith they were refreshed, least they should haue beene ouerwhelmed with present death. It may be also that Zachary had respect to the miserable estate of his time. But generally this is true: for by the comming of Christ there arose a light to all the godly, which were before, & also which were to come, which should quicken the because he extended his life also euen to the dead. To sit, signifieth as much as to lie downe, therefore Esay commaundeth the Church to arise when the day shone, 60. 1.

79. *To guide our feete.* By this clause Zacharias teacheth, that the cheife perfection of all goodnes and felicitie doth consist in Christ alone. The worde *peace* might heere haue beene vsed in his proper sense, and should not haue bin much amisse, because that the light of Christ pacifieth the mindes of men. But because that amongst the Hebrewes peace doth signifie a good and blessed successe of all things: I doubt not but that Zachary in this place would make Christ the authour of all perfect blessednes, least that we should seeke any thing that is good else where: but that we being perswaded, that through Christ we should be made perfectly & wholly blessed, might rest in him alone. To the same purpose belong those words of Esayas. 60. 19. Thou shalt haue no more sunne to shine by day, nor moone by night: for the Lord shall be thine euermore lasting light. If that Zachary by the onely beholding of his sonne, that was yet a child, was lead to speake so notably of the grace and power of Christ, before he was borne, are not they thrise & foure times vnthankfull, which after that he is dead, risen againe, and ascended into heauen, that hee might sit at the right hand of his father, do esteeme lesse honourably and reuerently of Christ, and they extenuate his power, whose prayse the holy Ghost set forth, while he was yet in his mothers wombe? For we must remember that which I touched before, that Zachary spake not of himselfe, but as the spirite of God governed his tongue.

80. *And the childe grew.* Luke addeth this to conclude the historie with. First he declareth that Iohn was strong in the spirit: wherby he signifieth that ther was a rare and vnwonted towardnesse in the child, which was a signe that the heauenly spirite dwelt in him: yet withall he sayth that he remained hid as one vnknowne in the wildernes, vntill the day came that he should shew himselfe: that is, vntill the Lord appointed to bring him forth: whereby we gather, that although Iohn knew well of his calling, yet he would not attempt any thing before the time, but taried the calling of God.

Math. 1
1. The booke of the generation of
Iesus Christ, the sonne of David,
the sonne of Abraham.
2. Abraham

Marke.

Luke. 3.

23 Iesus was supposed to bee the
sonne of Ioseph, which was the sonne
of Eli.

24. The

1. Abraham begate Isaac, and Isaac begat Jacob, and Jacob begat Iudas, and his brethren.

3. And Iudas begate Phares, and Zara of Thamar, and Phares begat Esrom, & Esrom begat Aram.

4. And Aram begate Aminadab, & Aminadab begat Naasson, and Naasson begat Salmon.

5. And Salmon begate Booz of Rachab, and Booz begate Obed of Ruth, and Obed begat Iesse.

6. And Iesse begat David the king, & David the king begat Salomo of her that was the wife of Urias.

7. And Salomon begate Roboam, and Roboam begate Abias, and Abias begate Asa.

8. And Asa begate Iosaphat, and Iosaphat begat Ioram, and Ioram begat Ozias.

9. And Ozias begate Ioatham, and Ioatham begate Achaz, and Achaz begat Ezechias.

10. Ezechias begate Manasses, and Manasses begat Amon, and Amon begate Iosias.

11. And Iosias begate Iechonias & his brethren, about the time they were carried away to Babylon.

12. And after they were carried away to Babylon, Iechonias begate Salathiel, and Salathiel begate Zorobabell.

13. And Zorobabell begate Abiud, and Abiud begat Eliacim, & Eliacim begate Azor.

14. And Azor begat Sadock, and Sadock begate Achim, and Achim begat Eliud.

15. And Eliud begate Eliazar, and Eliazar begate Matthan, and Matthan begat Iacob.

16. And Iacob begate Ioseph the husband of Mary of whome was borne Iesus, which was called Christ

17. So

24. The sonne of Matthat, the sonne of Lewi, the sonne of Melchi, the son of Ianna, the sonne of Ioseph.

25. The sonne of Mattathias, the sonne of Amos, the sonne of Nahum, the sonne of Esli, the sonne of Nagge.

26. The sonne of Maath, the sonne of Mattathias, the sonne of Semei, the sonne of Ioseph, the sonne of Iuda.

27. The sonne of Ioanna, the sonne of Rhesa, the sonne of Zorobabell, the sonne of Salathiel, the sonne of Neri.

28. The sonne of Melchi, the sonne of Addi, the sonne of Cosam, the sonne of Elmadam, the son of Er.

29. The sonne of Iose, the sonne of Eliezer, the sonne of Iorim, the son of Matthat, the sonne of Lewi.

30. The sonne of Simeon, the sonne of Iuda, the sonne of Ioseph, the son of Ionan, the son of Eliacim.

31. The sonne of Melea, the sonne of Mainan, the sonne of Matathas, the sonne of Nathan, the son of David.

32. The sonne of Iesse, the son of Obed, the sonne of Booz, the son of Salmon, the sonne of Naasson.

33. The sonne of Aminadab, the sonne of Aram, the sonne of Esrom, the sonne of Phares, the sonne of Iuda.

34. The sonne of Iacob, the son of Isaac, the sonne of Abraham, the sonne of Thare, the son of Nachor.

35. The sonne of Sarug, the son of Ragau, the sonne of Phaleg, the sonne of Eber, the sonne of Sala.

36. The sonne of Cainan, the sonne of Arphaxad, the son of Sem, the son of Noe, the son of Lamech.

37. The sonne of Methusala,

the

D 1

17. So all the generations from Abraham to Dauid, are fourteene generations: & fro Dauid vntil they were caried away into Babylon four teene generations: and after they were caried away into Babylon, vn till Christ, fourteene generations.

the sonne of Enoch, the sonne of Iared, the sonne of Maleleell, the son of Cainan.

38. The sonne of Enos, the son of Seth, the sonne of Adam, the son of God.

Because that both these genealogies, which are written of Matthew & Luke doe not agree in all things: it must first be seene whether that both of them do fetch the genealogie of Christ from Ioseph, or whether Matthew do so onely, and Luke doth fetch it from Mary. They that are of the latter iudgement haue a good colour for the difference, that is in diuers names. And truly at the first sight seeing that Luke doth so much differ from Matthew, it seemeth nothing lesse, then that they shoulde declare one and the same genealogie: For from Dauid vnto Salathiell, and againe from Zorobabell to Ioseph, they name altogether diuerse names. Furthermore, they pretende that it is absurde to bestowe so much labour in a matter not needefull, as to account the petegree of Ioseph twise, who yet was not the father of Christe. To what purpose (say they) is this repetition whereby there is nothing proued, that doth much appertaine to the edifying of faith? For if this thing bee onely knowne, that Ioseph was one of the posteritie and house of Dauid, yet the line of Christe remaineth doubtfull therefore, by their iudgements it was superfluous that both the Euangelistes should imploy themselves vpon this matter. But that Matthew repeateth the progenie of Ioseph, they excuse thus, that he did it, because that many did yet thinke him to be the father of Christ. But it were to be scorned at, that with this cockering he should nourish this most pettill error, & the text doth openly confute the same. For Matthew alsoone as he cometh to the ende of the genealogie, teacheth that Christ came not of the seede of Ioseph, but that by the secret power of the holy Ghost hee was conceived in the wombe of the Virgin: wherefore if their iudgements should stand, Matthew might bee reprooued of foolishnesse, and for want of consideration, as one, who in vaine would recite the genealogie of Ioseph. But their obiection is not yet answered, that the genealogie of Ioseph doth nothing appertaine to Christ. The answer is olde and commonly known, that in the person of Ioseph the petegree of Mary is also comprehended: because that the lawe commaunded that euery man should take him a wife in his owne tribe.

They take exceptions at this lawe, because that it was neglected almoste in all ages: but the argumentes which they vse are frivoulous. They cite that example, that the cleuen tribes promised with an oath, that they would not giue a wife to the men of Benjamin. If this were prescribed by lawe (say they) then neede there not a newe oath. But I answer that they doe yll and vnwisely, to drawe this extraordinary facte of theirs into a common rule: For it was necessary, one trybe being cutte off, that the body of the people shoulde haue bene mained, if that by this remedie there had not bene some helpe provided for

so great a necessitie. Therefore the common law is not in this to be considered. Again they object, that Mary the mother of Christ, was cosine to Elizabeth, whom Luke before witnessed to haue bene of the daughters of Aaron. The answer also to this is easie. It was lawfull for the maides of the tribe of Iuda or of any other tribe, to marrie into the the tribe of the priesthoode : because that, that reason which is expessed in the law, was not thereby hindered which was, least that the woman should cary her inheritance to any other, but to them of her owne tribe. So the holy historie 2. Para. 22. 11. declareth that the wife of Iorada the high priest came of the kingly stocke : Therefore it is neither maruaile nor thing vnwonted, if that the mother of Elizabeth was married to a Priest. But if any denie that these things are not so fully proued, that it is lawfull to determine Mary to be of the same tribe that Ioseph was, because that shee was his wife : verily I grant, that it cannot simply bee proued out of the bare historie, as it is here reade, except that other circumstances bee added to the same. But first it is to be noted, that the Euangelistes spake of things well knowne in their age : so that when the genealogie of Ioseph was drawne vnto Dauid, it was easie for euery man to draw the genealogie of Mary from thence also. And it is not to bee doubted, but that the Euangelistes being occupied in that which was commonly knowne in their age, were therefore the lesse curious about the same : For if any had doubted, they might easily and speedily haue made inquisition.

Furthermore, they take this as a thing graunted, that seeing Ioseph was a good man and modest, he would not take a wife, but out of his owne tribe, according to the appointment of the law. Although that generall law sufficed not to proue that Mary was of the kingly stocke : for Mary might haue come of the tribe of Iuda, though shee came not of the stocke of Dauid. Therefore the matter beeing thus, the Euangelistes had a care of the godly which would not contentiously strue, but might in the person of Ioseph knowe the genealogie of Mary, especially seeing the matter (as we sayd before,) was in that age well knowne and not doubtfull.

But it may seeme to be incredible, that these poore despised married folkes should be of the posteritie of Dauid, and should be that kingly seede, whereof the redeemer should come. Now, if any aske whether the genealogie, as it is set downe by Mathevv and Luke, doth clearely and euidently shewe, that Mary is of the stocke of Dauid : I grant that it cannot certainly be gathered by it. But seeing that the kindred of Mary and Ioseph was not then vnkowne, the Euangelistes were the lesse carefull in this matter : but yet the purpose of them both was to take away the offence, which the basenes, and the contempt, and the pouertie, as well of Ioseph as of Mary might breede, least that there might not be knowne in them any thing appertayning to the kingly race.

Furthermore, that they imagine or faine that Luke setteth downe the genealogie of Mary, and letteth that passe of Ioseph, is easily confuted : For thus : word for worde hee writeth, *Iesus was supposed to bee the sonne of Ioseph, which was the sonne of Eli, the sonne of Matthat.* Truly he maketh mention neither of the father, nor of the grandfather of Christ, but expressly

declareth the progenie of Ioseph himselfe. But I am not ignorant what answer they vse to knit vp this knot withall: For they say that sonne in that place is vsed for a sonne in lawe. And so that Ioseph was the sonne of Hely, they interpret thus: because he had his daughter to wife. But this is not agreeable with the order of nature, neither is there in any place of the Scripture any such example read.

Now, if Salomon be excluded out of the genealogie of Mary, then shall Christ cease to be Christ: for whatsoeuer is sayd of that stocke, it is grounded vpon that solemne promise. Thy successor, which shall sit vpon thy throne shall raigae for euer, 2. Sam. 7. 12. and Psal. 132. 11. I will be his father, and hee shall be my sonne. And it is without question that Salomon was the figure of this euermlasting king, which was promised to Dauid. And the promise cannot otherwise be applied to Christ: but as the truth of it was shadowed in Salomon 1. Chron. 28. 5.

Now if the stocke of Christ bee not referred to him, howe, or by what meanes shall hee be accounted the sonne of Dauid? Therefore whosoever putteth Salomon out of the genealogie of Christ, hee doth withall blot and wipe away the promises, by which he is knowne to be the sonne of Dauid. And how Luke fetcheth the petigree from Nathan, and yet reiecteth not Salomon, it shall be seene hereafter in his place. And (least I seeme too tedious) for that which is the summe of the matter, I say that these two genealogies doe agree together: yet there are to be noted foure differences in them. The first is, that Luke with a backward order (as they say) ascendeth from the last to the first: when that Mathew beginneth at the very originall. The second is, that Mathew stretcheth not his historie beyond the holy and elect stocke of Abraham. But Luke goeth on euen vnto Adam. The third, that Mathew entreateth of the genealogie, according to the law, and also permitteth himselfe, to leaue some out of the course of his account: in that he prouiding for the memory of the readers, doth onely recite the numbers of three fourteenes: but Luke doth more exactly follow the naturall stocke.

The fourth and last is, that they both speaking sometimes of the same men, doe yet vary in their names. Of the first difference seeing there is no great difficultie in it, it is but in vaine to make many wordes about it. The second wanteth not very good reason: for because that GOD had chosen the stocke of Abraham to himselfe, whence the redeemer of the world should be borne, and the promise of saluation was after a sort therein included vnto the coming of Christ, therefore Mathew doth not passe beyond those boundes appoynted of GOD: We must remembr that Paul sayth, that Christ was a minister of circumcision, for the trueth of GOD, to confirme the promised saluation made vnto the holy fathers, Rom. 15. 8. To the which that saying of Christ doth very well agree, that saluation is of the Iewes, Iohn. 4. 22. Therefore Mathew proposeth him to be seene in that holy stocke, to the which he was properly appointed. And also in the catalogue of Mathew the couenant of God is to be considered: whereby hee chose the

seed of Abraham for a people vnto himselfe, that it might be seperate from all other nations, as with a wall made vp betweene the. But Luke looketh higher: for although the redeemer was peculierly promised to the seed of Abraham, after that God had made his couenant with him: yet we know that all had need of him, presently after the fall of the first man, as he was then also promised to the whole world: But it was done by the wonderful counsell of God, that Luke should propose Christ vnto vs as the sonne of Adam, and that Matthew should include him in one stocke of Abraham: for it should haue profited vs nothing, that Christe was giuen of his father, the authour of saluation, except he had beene generally common for vs all. And also that had not beene true, which the Apostle sayeth, Hebrewes the 13. 8. that hee was yesterday, and to day, and is the same also for euer, if that his power and grace had not beene powred out vnto all ages from the creation of the worlde. Therefore let vs knowe that saluation in Christ is reuealed and giuen to all mankind: because that hee was not without cause called the sonne of Noah, and the sonne of Adam: yet because, that hee is to be sought in the worde of G O D, the spirit dooth not without aduise call vs by an other Euangeliste to the holy stocke of Abraham, where the treasure of eternall life together with Christ was layd vp for a time.

Let vs come to the thirde difference. It is not to bee doubted, but that Matthew obserueth another order then Luke doth: for the one placeth Salomon next after Dauid, and the other placeth Nathan, whereby it euidently appeareth that they set downe diuerse lines. Good and learned interpreters doe thus reconcile this weve of discord, that Matthew leauing the naturall genealogie (which Luke followeth) doth rehearse the legall genealogie: and I call that the legall genealogie, whereby it came to passe, that the right of the kingdome was translated to Salathiell. And in that Eusebius in the first booke of his Ecclesiasticall history, following the iudgemente of Aphricanus, doth rather call that the legall genealogie, which Luke setteth downe, hee speaketh it in the same sense: for hee meaneth not any thing else, but that the kingdome, which was established in the person of Salomō, by lawfull meanes did fall at length vnto Salathiell. But they saye better and more aptly, which saye that the legall order was set downe by Mattheue: For hee naming Salomon presently after Dauid, Doth not obserue from whom Christ came by continuall course after the fleshe: But howe hee descended from Salomon and other kinges, that hee might bee theyr lawfull successour, in whose hand the perpetuie of the kingdome shoulde bee established, according to the couenant of God. Their iudgement is probable, which thinke that the stocke of Salomon ended by the death of Ochozias, as 2. Kings. 9. 27.

& II. 1.

That whiche some reporte out of the commentaries of the Iewes, that Dauid was commaunded, if Salomon wanted ofspring, that the kingly power shoulde come to the posteritie of Nathan, I leaue as I find it: onely I take that which is certaine, that the succession of the kingdom was not confused, but had his distinct degrees, Now when the holy history

declareth, that after the slaughter of Ochozia his mother Athalia did hold the kingdom, and the kingly stocke beeing wholly ouerthrowne, it is more then probable, that those wicked and moste cruell murders were committed of that woman so ambitious of gouernement, least that shee beeing driuen to liue a priuat life, shoulde see the kingdom translated otherwhere. Therefore, if Ochozia had, had a Sonne liuing after him, shee might haue raigned in the Courte, vnder the colour of protection, freely and safely without enuy and daunger. Therefore that shee had made her selfe infamous and odious by her extreame offences, was a signe of desperation, for that shee could not holde her kingdom at home in her owne house. But the reason why Ioas is called the Sonne of Ochozias is, because hee was next in degree vnto him. 2. Chro. 23. 9. So that he might bee rightly called the true and naturall heire of the kingdom. For besides that Athalia (if wee graunt that she was his grandmother) would gladly haue so abused the title of the infant, who is there endued with any small discretion, that can thinke it likely, that the naturall sonne of the king could be so hid of the priest Ioiada, and that his grandmother should not more diligently haue sought him out? But rather if a man consider all things wisely, it is easily gathered, that the next heire of the kingdom was of another line. And that is the meaning of the wordes of Ioiada: the kinges Sonne shall raigne according to the couenaut of the Lorde with Dauid, 2. Chron. 23. 3. as if he should haue sayde, that it hadde been an hainous offence, if that a woman beeing a stranger, should with violence take vnto her selfe the scepter, which God had appointed to remaine in the house of Dauid. Wherefore there is no absurditie, if Luke doth fetch the petegree of Christ from Nathan: because it may be that the stocke of Salomon, which appertained to the succession of the kingdom was decayed.

Nowe if any object that *Iesus* cannot bee acknowledged for the Messias, which was promised, except he had come of the posteritie of Salomon, who was certainly knowne to haue beene a figure of Christ: although that naturally he came not of Salomon, yet by the legall order hee is to bee accounted as his Sonne, because he had his originall from kinges.

But such diuersitie in the names doth trouble many very much. For from Dauid euen vnto Ioseph there appeareth no consent between the two Euangelists, but in Salathiel & Zorobabell. The excuse which was wont to bee made (that the difference rose hereof, that the Iewes for the most parte had two names) is hardly admitted of many. But at this day seeing the cause that moued Matthew to draw and set downe this genealogie is vnkown to vs, it is no maruell if we know not why in these particular names, they both agree, or disagree: but it is not to bee doubted, but after the captiuite of Babylon they rehearse certaine, the same men by diuerse names. But I thinke that the names of Zorobabell & Salathiel were aduisedly retained for the change of the estate of the people: because that then the kingly maiesty was extinguished. The small shadowe of gouernement which remained testified a greate change, which admonished the faythfull to hope after a more notable kingdom, then that visible kingdom of Salomon, which flourished but a short time.

Now

Now it is worth the labour to note this also, that there is no absurdity in that that Luke doth reckon & account more in his Catalogue then Mat. doth, for it is ordinarily seene that there are more in number in the naturall generation, then in the legall. To this also appertaineth, that Matthew (when hee deuידed the genealogie of Christ into three parts, & would apply to euery part, 14. generations,) thought that he might freely leaue out certaine names, which Luke might not omitte, seeing he bound not himselfe to that law. Thus farre haue I discoursed of the genealogie of Christ, as much as seemeth profitable & conuenient for the summe. If any man be tickled with a further curiositie, I remembering Paule his admonition, doe preferre sobriety & modestie before the frivulous arguing about things of no waight: the place to Tit 3. 9. is well knowne where he forbiddeth vs to disput over curiously of genealogies. Now lastly it remaineth to shew why Matthew comprehendeth the whole genealogie of Christ into 3. portions, & placeth 14. men in euery one. They that say that he did this that he might prouide for the memory of the readers, they neither say all, nor nothing, for this is true, the catalogue proposed in 3. equall numbers, may the easelier be remembred, yet withall it is plaine that here are expressly noted, the 3. sortes & states of people, which were after the time that Christ was promised to Abraham vntill the fulnes of time wherein he was shewed in the flesh, for although that the tribe of Iuda did excell all the rest of the tribes in honour, yet before Dauid it had no principallitie. In Dauid the kingly maiesty shone forth beyond the hope of all men, which continued to Iechonias, frō that time there remained some dignitie and gouernement in the tribe of Iuda, which staid the mindes of the godly vntill the comming of the Messias.

1. *The booke of the generation.* Many interpreters haue laboured in vaine about this title, that they might excuse Matthew for naming of the whole history of the one halfe part of his first chapter, for this *epigraphe* (or inscription) doth not extend to the whole booke. But the word booke is put here and vsed for a catalogue, as if it should haue bene sayd, the catalogue of the generation of Christ: Furthermore he calleth Christ in respect of the promises, the Sonne of Abraham, the sonne of Dauid, because that God had promised that a seede shall rise from Abraham, in whome all the nations of the world shall bee blessed. Gen. 12. 3. But vnto Dauid there was a more euident promise made, that it should come to passe that the kingdome should remaine stedfast in his house vnto the end of the worlde, Psal. 72. 5. 7. and a king out of his stocke shall sit vpon the throne, so long as the Sunne and the Moone do shine in the heauen, Psal. 89. 29. whereupon it became a common speech amongst the Iewes, that Christ was called the Sonne of Dauid.

2. *Iacob begate Iudas.* Seeing that Matthew couered with silence Ismaell, the first begotten sonne of Abraham, and Esau who by order of nature was superior to his brother Iacob, hee doth not without aduise giue a place to the 12. Patriarkes in this genealogie, seeing that God bestowed grace of adoption vpon them all. Therefore he declareth that the blessing promised in Christ, did not belong to the only tribe of Iuda, but that it was common to all the children of Iacob whome God gathered into his Church, when Ismaell & Esau were made straungers.

3. *Iudas begat Phares & Zara of Thamar.* This was the beginning of that humbling, whereof Paule speake th, Phil. 2. 7. The sonne of God might haue kept his genealogie free and pure from all offence & note of infamie, but he coming into the world that he might humble himselfe; & taking vpon him the forme of a seruant, became a worme & not a man, the scorn of men & the outcast of the people, & at the length endured the most cursed death of the crosse. Also this infamie in his genealogie hath not he refused, that he should spring from an incestuous bed, which was made amongst his ancelsters: for although that Thamar was not enforced through lust, to desire the company of her father in lawe, yet by an vnlawfull meane she attempted to reuenge her iniury. And Iudas when hee desired to lie with a whore, fell vpon his daughter in law. But the incomparable goodnesse of God striue with the sinne of them both, so that this adulterous seed should neuerthelesse enioy the scepter.

6. *Begat Dauid the king.* Dauid onely is adorned with this title, because that God proposed in his person the figure of the Messias of the gouernour & capitaine that was to come. The kingdom first began at Saule, but because that this came to passe through a tumult, & by the wicked desires of the people, therefore the change at length from him to Dauid was esteemed lawfull, especially in as much as pertained to the covenant of God, wherein he had promised, that hee should be a gouernour for euer ouer his people: when as the people 1. Sam. 8. 4. had vnhappy shaken off the yoke of God, and with condemned voyces demanded a king for themselues, Saule was graunted them for a small time: but God presently established his kingdome, which should be a pledge of true blessednes in the hand of Dauid. Therefore let vs knowe that here is noted the second estate of the people, as it was ordained of the Lord: yet withall, the shame and dishonesty of man is added by the Euangelist, how that the same can after a sort defile the glory of God his blessing in that Dauid begat Salomon of Bersebe, whome he had wickedly taken from her husband: & that he might enioy her he most vnfaithfully betrayed the innocent man to be slain with the sword of his enemies. This deformitie falling out about the beginnings of their kingdome, ought to make the Iewes not to glory in flesh, God also would it should be declared, that in the establishing of that kingdom hee would not bee bound to the merites of men: but in that succession which Mat. described, it appeareth by the sacred history, that 3. kings were omitted. They which say that this was done through forgetfulnes, are not to be heard, neither is their reason to be allowed of, which say that they are unworthy to haue any place giuen the in the genealogie of Christ: for that should haue false also to the lot of many other, whom yet Matthew mixeth indifferently with the godly & holy ones. Therefore it seemeth rather to be true, whē he would make a catalogue of 14. kings, he was not very curious in making his choise, because it was sufficient for him to compose a genealogie to set before the eyes of the readers vnto the end of the kingdom, but that there are read onely 13. it is most likely to be the fault and carelesnesse of Printers or wryters of bookes. Epiphanius in his first booke *contra hereses*, sheweth the cause: that when the name of Iechonias was put in twise, the vnlearned presumed to scrape it out of the second place, as a woorde more then needed, but hee admonisheth that it shoulde not haue beene done

done so, because that Ioachim the sonne of king Ioachim, had the name Iechonias common with his sonne. 1. Chron. 2. 17. 2. Chron. 36. 1. Jer. 27. 10. and 28. 4. And Robert Stephanus citeth a Greeke copie, where this name Ioachim is put in.

12 After they were caried into Babylon. That is after the Iewes were caried into captiuitie, for the Euangelist declareth that the posteritie of Dauid, of kings were then become slaues and banished men. Furthermore, when that captiuitie was a kinde of destruction, it was wrought by the wonderfull providence of God, that the Iewes were not onely gathered together into one body, but also that there remayned certaine remnants of gouernment in the house of Dauid, for they which returned home, did of their owne free will obey the gouernment of Zorobabel, therefore the fragments of the kingly scepter endured and lasted in this world, vntill the comming of Christ was at hande, according to the prophecie of Iacob. The scepter shall not depart from Iuda nor a lawgiuer from betweene his feete, vntill the Shiloh come. Gen. 49. 10. and in that estate, although there was a miserable and a sorowfull dissipation of the people yet they neuer were without some sparks of the grace and fauour of God shining amongst them. The Greeke word (for the which the old interpreter vsed *transmigrationem*, Erasmus hath put *Exilium*) it properly signifieth a changed dwelling place, whereby vnderstand that the Iewes were enforced to go out of their country, that in other places they might dwell as strangers that were neuer there.

16. Iesus that is called Christ. In the surname Mathew doth declare his office that the readers may vnderstand him to be no priuat man, but annoynted from aboue to fulfill the worke of redemption. But what maner of annoynting his was, and to what purpose it appertained, I will not in many words at this present declare. Of the voice it selfe this is to be vnderstood: After the kingdom was abolished, they began to referre it to that one from whom the full restitution of their decayed estate was to be hoped for: for so long as there did any maiestie flourish in the house of Dauid, the kings were wont to be called *Christi*. But least the deformed waistnes which after followed, should throw the minds of the godly into desperation, it was the will of God that this name should bee applied to the onely redeemer, as it appeareth out of Daniell, and the Euangelicall historie doth declare that after the sonne of God was giuen in the flesh, that this was the common maner of speech in euery place.

Mathew. 1.

18. Now the birth of Iesus Christ was thus, when as his mother Mary was betrothed to Ioseph before they came together, shee was found with child by the holy Ghost.

19. Then Ioseph her husband being a iust man, and not willing to make her a publike example, was minded to put her away secretly.

20 But whiles he thought these things, behold, the Angel of the Lord appeared vnto him in a dreame, saying, Ioseph

Marke.

Luke.

she Son of David, feare not to take Mary for thy wife, for that which is conceived in her, is of the holy Ghost.

21. And shee shall bring forth a sonne, and thou shalt call his name Iesus, for hee shall deliuer his people from their sinnes.

22 And all this was done, that it might bee fulfilled which was spoken of the Lord by the prophet, saying:

23. Behold a Virgine shall beare a sonne, and they shall call his name Emmanuell, which is by interpretation, God with vs.

24. Then Ioseph being raysed from sleepe, did as the Angell of the Lord had inioyned him, and tooke his wife.

25. But he knew her not, till shee had brought forth her first sonne, and hee called his name Iesus.

18. The birth of Iesus Christ. Mathew doth not as yet declare, where, or after what maner Christ was borne, but how the heauenly generation was reuealed vnto Ioseph. First he sayth that Mary was found with childe of the holy Ghost, not that, that secret worke of God was commonly knowne, but as it became knowne vnto men, so doth hee reueale the power of the spirite, which as yet lay hid. He sheweth the time, when shee was betrothed to Ioseph, and yet before that came together: for in respect of the assurance of the marriage, as soone as the maide was promised to a man, the Iewes esteemed her as a lawfull wite, and therefore the law condemned them of adulterie, which defiled themselues with them that were contract. The word which the Euangelist doth vte, doth eyther modestly signifie a secret accompanying together, or it is simply taken for to dwell together, as husband and wife, shoulde make one house and one familie. So the sense is, that the virgine was not yet deliuered by her parents into the hand of her husband, but as yet liued vnder the custodie of her parents.

19. Being a iust man. Some interpreters vnderstand, that Ioseph because that hee was iust, would haue spared his wife, so iustice with them shoulde signifie humanitie, or a moderation of the minde bent vnto gentlenes. But they are of better iudgement which reade these two clauses contrarily, that Ioseph was iust, but yet hee was carefull for the fame of his wife, so that the iustice which is heere commended, was in respect of the hatred and detestation of the sinne. Because that hee suspected her of adultery, nay becaute that he was periwaded that shee was an aduresser, he would not nourish such an offence with his gentlenesse: and certainly he is his wifes bawde, whosoever he is that winketh at her vnchastitie, good and honest mindes do not onely abhorre such an offence, but also the lawes doe spot with infamie such negligent sloughfulness, as that is whereof I spake. Therefore Ioseph with a zeale of iustice, condemned the fault which hee supposed to be in his wife, yet his minde bent to humanitie, stayed him from executing the extremitie of the law. This was a meane more qualified, if hee, priuily departing, shoulde goe to an other place

place, whereby we gather that he was not of so soft & so effeminate a mind, that vnder the pretence of mercy he would nourish the sinne by couering it. Onely he remitted somewhat of the extremitie of the law, & would not cast her forth to the infamous reproch: & it is not to be doubted but that his minde was stay- ed by the secret instincte of the spirit: for we know how outrageous realosie is, & how violently it carrieth a man away, wherefore although Ioseph had endu- red an ouer dangerous inuasion, yet was hee wonderfully crossed with diuers perilles which were at hand, when he first began to deliberate of the matter. I iudge the same of Maries silence, though we graunt that for shame she durst not tell her husband that she was with child by the holy Ghost, yet she was rather stayed by the prouidence of God, then by hir owne counsel or wit. for if shee had told him, as it was a matter incredible, so Ioseph should haue thought that she had mocked him, & that all men would haue laughed at, & haue taken as a meere fable, neither should the Oracle of God haue bin so much esteemed of, if it had followed after. Therefore the Lord suffered his seruant Ioseph to be caried away into a wrong opinion, that with his owne voyce he might reduce him into the way, but it is to be knowne, that it was rather done for our sakes, then for his owne priuate cause, for the Lorde by all meanes preuented, least there should be any finisiter suspition in the Oracle. For seeing the Angell com- meth to Ioseph as yet ignorant of the whole matter, the wicked haue no occa- sion to cauilt: for he came without partialitie to heare the voyce of God, hee was not entised by the flatteries of his wife, the opinion which he had conceiued was not drawne from him by entreaties, he was not bent to the contrary part by humane reasons but whē the false offence of his wife sticke fast in his mind, then did God shew himselfe, as lette downe from heauen to vs, that he might be the more conuenient witness, and haue the greater credit with vs. We see that it was God his will to teach his seruant Ioseph by an Angell, to that ende that he himselfe might be a heauenly messenger to others, and might de- clare and tell that which hee hearde neyther of his wife, nor of any other mor- tall creature. That this mysterie was not at the first reuealed to moe, this se- meth to bee the reason, because that it was meete, that this incomparable trea- sure should be kept secreete, and onely reuealed to the children of God. Fur- thermore, there is no absurditie in it, if the Lord (as hee often vseth) would by this meanes prooue and trie the fayth and obedience of his children. Cer- tainely except a man maliciously refuse to credite GOD, and to yeeld him selfe in obedience to him, he will be sufficiently satisfied with these testimonies wherewith this principle of our faith is prooued: for the same cause also did the Lord permit Mary to marry, that the celestiall conception of the Virginne might be hid vnder the vaile of marriage, vntil the appointed time of reuea- ling the same. In the meane while, the vnfaithfull (as their vnthankfulnes & malice deserued) are blinded and see none of these mercies,

20. *While shee thought these things.* Heere wee see howe the Lorde vsith to bee present with his children in conuenient time, and (as they say) euen in the very point or time of neede, whereby we also gather, that while hee seemeth to dissemble at our cares and sorrowes, he yet hath a regard vnto vs. but hee so stayeth and secretly resteth, while hee examineth our pari-
ence.

ence: & then in his time appointed he helpeth vs. And although his helpe seemeth to be slow & late, yet it is profitable that it should bee so deferred. The Angel appeared in a dreame this is one of the ordinary maners of reuelations, wherof mention is made, Num. 12. 7. where God speaketh thus. To the Prophets which are among you, I wil shew my selfe either by a vision or by a dreame but I wil not do so with my seruant Moses, to whom I will shew my selfe face to face: but it is to be obserued that these sortes of dreames do much differ from the which coe of natural causes, for they haue a marke of assurance engraued in them: & they are sealed from aboue, that wee should not doubt of the truth of them. The dreames which men commonly haue, are woont to rise either of the constitution of nature, or through euill disposition of the bodies, or of such like causes. But sometimes the spirit giueth witness to those dreames which are of God, to assure vs certainly that it is God which speaketh. *Sonne of Dauid bee not afraid* This exhortation of the Angell, declareth that Ioseph was carefull in his mind, least he should be defiled with any infection, by bearing with his wifes adultery. He therefore taketh away that opiniõ of the offence which he had conceived in his mind, to that end that with a quiet conscience hee might remaine & dwell with his wife: he applieth the epithite of the *Sonne of Dauid* to the present cause, that he might stir vp his mind to that high mystery, because that he was of that familie (and that remaining a liue but with a few other) frõ whence saluation was promised to the world. Ioseph therefore hearing Dauid named, out of whose stocke he came, ought to remēt that notable couenant of God, of the restitution of the kingdom, & so should know that he speaks not of any new or strang thing: for it is as much as if the Angel by setting forth the prophesies of the Prophets shoulde prepare Ioseph his mind to accept this present fauour. *Thou shalt call his name Iesus.* Of the word it selfe I haue before spoken briefly but sufficiently. I will now onely adde one thing. Their dreame is confuted by the wordes of the Angell, which deriue this name from *Iehoua* the essentiall name of GOD: for the Angell sheweth why the Sonne of GOD is to bee so called, that is, because hee shall saue his people: whereof wee gather an etymologie, meere contrary to that which they imagine. But in vaine do they seeke by this caull to slip away: Christe is to bee counted the author of saluation most properly and most aptly, because that hee is God eternal. For wee muste not heere seeke onely, what GOD hath performed and bestowed vpon vs: but this name was giuen vnto the sonne, for an especiall cause, because of the commaundement which was enioyned him from the father, and by reason of the office which he had when he descended to vs. Now it were mere madnesse to knitte these two wordes, *Iesu* & *Iehoua* together, as if they were but one name, seeing that they agree but in two letters and differre in all the rest, and which haue no likenesse in them at all. I leaue this kind of forging to the Alchumistes, frõ whom the Cabalistes do not much differ, who haue inuented for vs these filthy and vaine toyes. But the Sonne of God when hee came to vs in the flesh, had also his name giuen him of his Father, that by the same it might bee openly shewed, to what ende hee came, what his power was, and what properly was to be looked for of him: for the roote of his name *Iesu*, is from the Hebrewe verbe *in hiphil*, which signifieth

signifieth to saue, and in the Hebrew is after an other manner pronounced, namely *Iehosua*. But the Euangelistes writing in Greeke followed the accustomed maner of speech: for the Greeke interpreters as well in Moses as in other bookes of the olde Testament, haue translated it *Iesoun*, whereby their ignorance is againe reproofed, which wrest and wricke, rather then deuie this name Iesu from Iehoua: for they account it for a great absurditie, if that any mortall man should haue this name common with the sonne of God, and they cry out tragically, that Christ will neuer suffer his name thus to bee prophaned: As though that it were not well knowne of the contrary, that the name of Iesu is as common to those men, as that of Iehosua. Nowe seeing that it sufficiently appeareth that the Sonne of God, vnder the name of Iesu is commended vnto vs as the authour of saluation, we will liste more neerely the Angels wordes. He shall saue (sayth he) his people from their sinnes first this is to be obserued, that they of themselues were lost, whome Christ was sent to saue: and namely hee is called the Saviour of the Church. If they whom God hath ioyned so neare vnto himselfe, are drowned in death and destruction, vntill Christ restore them life: then what shall wee say of strangers, to whom there was neuer any hope of life appearing. Wherefore it is to bee concluded, while saluation in Christ is reiecte, that all mankind is subiect to destruction. But the cause of destruction is withall to bee noted: for the celestiall iudge dooth not pronounce the curse against vs rashly and without a cause. Therefore the Angell witnesseth that wee perished and were holden oppressed vnder the miserable yoke of damnation, for that by our sinnes wee were estranged from life, whereby the corruption and wickednesse of our nature is reuealed vnto vs, for if any man were perfecte and able to liue a righteous life, hee might bee without Christ the deliuerer: but all, without the exception of any one, haue neede of his grace. Therefore it followeth that they are all the seruantes of Sinne, and are destitute of the true righteousness. Heere againe wee gather, what manner and way it is that Christ vseth in sauing, that is, that he deliuereth vs from sinnes.

Furthermore there are two parts of this deliuerance: first, in that hee by sacrifice hauing made a full satisfaction, giueth vs free pardon and forgiveness, whereby wee are exempted from the guiltinesse of death, and are reconciled to God. The next, that he sanctifying vs with his spirit, chalengeth vs from the tyrannie of Sathan that wee should liue to righteousness: therefore Christ is not acknowledged truly as a Saviour, vntill that by faith we learne to embrace the free forgiveness of our sinnes, and that we knowe that we are accounted righteous before God, because that we are freed from guiltinesse: then that we being without all trust eyther of our workes or of our power, aske of him the spirit of righteousness and truth. The Angell without doubt nameth the Iewes the people of Christ, whose head and king he was ordayned. But because the Gentiles were shortly after to be grafted into the stocke of Abraham, this promise of saluation is generally stretcht to all, which by faith are vntied to that one bodie of the Church.

22. *All this was done.* They very fondly and childishly trifle, which
 affirm

I affirme that this name of Iesu was given him because he should be called *Immanuell*. For Mathevv doth not only snatch at one onely clause, but hee comprehendeth what thing so euer was heauenly and diuine in the conception of Christ: to that purpose also appertaineth that note of vniuersalitie. Now let vs see how aply this prophesie of Etiaias is cited, the place is sufficiently knowne and much spoken of, chap. 7. 14. But the Iewes according to their woonted malice depraue the same, although that they therein shew no lesse blinde and foolish then a wicked hatred of Christ and of the truth And many of their Rabbynes were growne to that impudencie, that they expounded the same of king Ezechias, who was at that time borne, and was about 15. yeare olde. I pray you what maner of libertie of lying is this, that they will rather ouerthrow the order of nature, and hide a young man againe in his mothers wombe, that he might be borne at 16. yeares of age, then they will admit the truth to come to light? But these enemies of Christ are woorthy to be stricken of God with the spirite of giddinesse and astonishment, that they might so be befouled. Others faime vnto themselves some vnknowne sonne of king Achaz, whome the Prophet foretold that should be borne. But I demaund by what right hee was called *Immanuell*, and how the earth was subiect to his gouernment, who as a priuate man ended his life without honour: for shortly after the same Prophet appointeth that same childe (whosoever hee was) Lorde of the earth, & they foolishly doe bable, which will that this should be spoken of the Prophet his sonne: and truely, the Christian writers were in this matter very grossely deceived, in drawing that prophesie which followeth in the next chapter to Christ The Prophet there sayth, that by a vision hee was commanded to keepe companie with his wife, and the Sonne which hee had begotten had this name giuen him by God, *Make hast and spoyle*: for in that place is onely noted the vehemencie of the warre, which was at hand wth horrible destruction, whereby it may easily be gathered that these matters were altogether diuers Therefore let vs seeke the right sense of this place, when that at the besieging of the citie of Ierusalem, king Achaz was afraid, nay hee was almost dismayd with feare: a Prophet was sent vnto him, who shoulde promise that G O D would be the keeper of the Citie: But seeing a simple promise did not comfort his confused minde, the Prophet was commaunded to giue him what signe soeuer hee shoulde aske, eyther in heauen or in earth. When as that wicked hypocrite couering his infidelitie refused a signe, the Prophet vrged him more hardly, and at the length sayd: Yet God shall giue vnto you a signe, for behold the Virgine shall conceiue and beare a sonne. &c. Wee interpret this to be spoken of Christ in this maner: All you the posteritie of Dauid, you endeouour as much as in you lyeth to blot out and abolish the fauour promised vnto you, (for the Prophet expressly nameth the house of Dauid in reproch) yet your vnfaithfulnesse shall neuer bring to passe, but that the truth of G O D shall haue the vpper hande: God promiseth that this Citie shall be safe and free from the enemies. But if his worde bee not sufficient, hee is readie to giue you a token of assurance at your pleasure: you exclude both the graces, and you driue them from you, yet God will stand fast in the assurance of his covenant, for the promised redeemer shall come, in whom God

will perfectly present himselfe vnto his people. The Iewes obiect that Esaya should haue done foolishly and absurdly, if he should haue giuen to those men in that age, such a signe as should be shewed eight hundred yeares after or ther about. And here they very proudly list vp themselues, because that this obiection was let slip and buried, eyther through the vnskilfulnes or the carelesnesse of the Christians. But the answere seemeth no hard to me, if we obserue, that the couenant of adoption was giuen vnto the Iewes, whereof all the rest of God his benefites should depend. Therefore there was a generall promise, whereby God had chosen the children of Abraham as a people for himselfe, vpon the which couenant all the speciall promises had their ground. Againe, the Messias was the foundation of this couenant: Now we perceiue that the cause of the deliuerance of this citie was, for that it was the sanctuary of God, and that the redeemer was to come out fro thence, This respect being taken away, Ierusalem should haue perished a 100. times. Now let the godly readers consider, seeing that the king had openly reiected the signe offered him from God was it not conuenient for the Prophet to goe to the Messias? as if hee should haue sayd: Although this age is vnworthy of that deliuerance which I promised from the Lord, yet God being mindefull of his couenant, shall deliuer this city fro the enemies. That he might therefore shew them no particular signe to testifie his fauor, this one ought to be enough, & more the enough that the Messias should come of the stock of Dauid. And it is to be noted, that the prophet calleth the vnbeleuers to the general couenant to be a maner of reproofe, because that they did admit no particular signe. Now it is sufficiently proued as I think, that when as the gate was shut against all miracles, it was high time for the Prophet to repaire to Christ, that the vnbeleuers might knowe that there was no other cause of their deliuerance, then the couenant which was made with the fathers. And by this wonderfull maner of teaching, it was the will of God to testifie to all ages, that he therefore continually was so mercifull to the children of Abraham, because he had made a free couenant with them in Christ, and not for any of their deserts. But the Iewes with an other euill endeour to shifte away this our iudgement, becaute that presently it followeth in the text of the Prophet: Afore the childe shall haue knowledge to eschew the euill, and to chuse the good, the land shall be forsaken of two kings. &c. Hereof they gather that the birth of the childe is promised, which should not bee long delayed, or therwise that should not agree which is spoken of the change of the kingdoms so hard at hand, which the Prophet declared should bee before the infant had passed the one halfe of his age, I answere, when as Esayas had brought him as a signe which should be the authour of saluation, and sayd that an infant should be borne which should be the true *Immanuel*, or (that I may vse Pauls word) God manifested in the flesh, 1. Tim. 3. 16. He then generally speaketh of all the infants of that age, for the which matter, there is a strong reason at hand. For hauing first spoken of the generall couenauent of GOD, hee returneth to the especiall promise, for the which cause hee was sent: so the first place which appertayneth to the last and full redemption, noteth one certayne childe to whome the title of GOD should onely belong: but the latter place which is referred to that speciall benefite which was then at hand, appoynteth the

time by the infancie of them which then were new borne, or shortly after were to be borne. Hetherto (except I be deceiued) I haue with strong and sound reasons refuted the cauils of the Iewes, wherewith they endeour to ouerwhelm the glory of Christ, least by this prophesie it should shine forth. Now it resteth for vs to take away that cauill in the word *glmh*. They very frowardly shake vp Mathew, who proue that Christ shoulde bee borne of a virgine, when that the Hebrew word doth simply note a young woman, and they scorne vs, as men deceiued with a word wrongfully translated, that we should beleeeue that hee was conceived by the holy Ghost, when that the Prophet onely sayth that hee was the sonne of a young woman. But first therein they shew ouermuch pleasure in contending, while they vrge that worde to bee vnderstoode of a yong woman knowne vnto a man, which the Scripture attributeth euery where to Virgins. The etymologie also agreeth with the same which signifieth a hiding, wherein is noted a maidenly shamefastnesse, they bring one place out of the Prouerbes, chap. 30. 19. which yet helpeth them nothing at all, for there Salomon speaketh of a maide, whom a young man loueth, but it doth not presently follow, that he should be defiled whom a young man loueth, nay the coniecture on the other part is more probable. Furthermore, if I should grant that which they require of the word, yet the matter it selfe conuinceth them and enforceth them to confesse that the Prophet speaketh of a wonderfull and vnvonted birth. He crieth that he bringeth them a signe from the Lorde, and that no common signe but such a one as should excell all others: if he had onely sayd that a woman should beare a childe, then how ridiculous a thing had it bene for him to make so solempne a preface? Wee see how the Iewes through their owne frowardnesse, do not onely set forth themselues to be scorned at: but also the most reuerend mysteries of God. And it is not a vaine argument which is gathered out of the whole text: a damsell shall conceive: why is there no mention made of the man? The Prophet commendeth and speaketh of some vnaccouttomed and vnusall thing. Furthermore, the commandement of giuing the name to the childe, was giuen to the damsell, in the which matter the Prophet also speaketh of a thing extraordinary, for although that the Scripture declareth that the mothers oft times gaue the names to the children: yet they did it by the authoritie of the fathers: therefore the Prophet directing his speech to the damsell, doeth in this childe take from the men what right soeuer the order of nature hath giuen the. Then let this remaine stedfast, that the Prophet comendeth this great miracle of God that all the godly might attentiuely & reuerently consider the same, which the Iewes doe vnworthily profane, applying that to a common maner of conceiuing which is spoken of the secret working and power of the spirit.

22. *His name Immanuel.* The scripture useth to speak thus, that God is with vs, when that he is present with vs, with his helpe & with his grace, and exerciseth the power of his hand to defend vs. But here is the meane expressed, wherby God communiceth with men: for without Christ we are alienated from God, and by Christ we are not only receiued into his fauour, but we are also made one with him. And that which Paul teacheth to the Ephe. 2. 17. that the Iewes vnder the law were neere vnto God, & that ther was a deadly hatred betweene him & the Gentiles, meaneth nothing els, but that God in shadowes & figures gaue signes of his

his presence vnto this people which hee had adopted, for that promise was in force, God in the midst of thee. Dut. 6. 15. & 7. 11. Also this is my rest, Psal. 132. 14. But seeing that familiar coniunction of the people with God, did depend of the mediatur, because that in substance he was not yet fully reuealed, by signes he was shadowed. His seate and his dwelling place was placed betwene the Cherubins, because that the Arke was the figure and the visible pledge of his glory. But in Christ no more a shadowed but a perfect presence of God was giuen and shewed vnto the people: for the which cause Paule saith to the Col. 2. 9. that all fulnesse of the Godhead doth dwell in him bodily. And truly, he could not otherwise haue beene a lawfull mediatur, except that vnseperable conioyning of both the natures in him had ioyned men to God: neither is there any cause why the Iewes shoulde iangle, that the name of God is often transferred to those monuments, wherein hee witnesseth his presence to the saythfull: for it cannot bee denied but that this name containeth in it a secret contrariety, which compareth the presence of God reuealed in Christ, with the whole maner of his presence, as hee was shewed to the old people before the coming of Christ. If the cause of this name began then in deede to bee manifest, whe that Christ appeared in the flesh: then it followeth that in times past God was ioyned to the fathers not fully, but only in parte: where of againe it is concluded, that Christ is God manifested in the flesh. And hee hath exercised the office of a mediatur euen from the beginning of the world. But because all this did depend of the later reuelation, then as though he were clothed with a new person, he was worthely at the length called *Immanuel*, whenas he came forth as a Priest, who with the sacrifice of his owne body shoulde wash away the sinnes of men, and with the price of his owne blood shoulde reconcile them to his father, and to bee short, should fulfill all the partes of mans saluation. So first in this name the diuine maiestie of Christ is to be considered of vs, that it may haue that reuerence of vs which is due to the onely and the eternall God. But yet neuerthelcffe that fruite is not to bee neglected, which God would thereof gather and receiue from vs: for as oft as wee behold God and man in the person of one Christ, we may certainly determine that God possesseth vs, if by fayth we be ioyned to Christ. That the number is changed in that verbe, *they shall call*, it differeth nothing from those things which I spake before, the Prophet speaketh to one virgin, and therefore he vseth the second person, *thou shalt call*. But for what cause this name was first vttered, this is the common confession of all the godly, that God gaue himselfe in Christ to bee enioyed of vs all.

24. *Ioseph being raised.* The readinesse of the obedience which is heere described, doth make no whit lesse to testifie the certaintie of the faith of Ioseph, then it doth for the prayse of his obedience, for except that euery doubt hadde bin taken away, & his conscience very well seled, he neuer so willingly and so sodainly had changed his counsell & taken his wife, through whose company he lately iudged himselfe to haue bin defiled, therefore there was some note of the power of God imprinted in his dreame, which suffered not his mind to wauer. Then followed the effect of fayth, that the will of God being knowne, he presently prepared himselfe to obey it.

85. He knew her not till she. Vnder the colour of this place, Heluidius in times past moued great troubles in the Church, for that he would gather thereof, that Mary was a virgin but vnto her first birth, & that after she had other children by her husband. The perpetual virginitie of Mary was very sharply & copiously defended by Hierome, let this one thing suffice vs, that it can be very fondly and ill gathered out of the wordes of the Euangelist what became of her after that Christ was borne. He is called the first borne, but not in any other respect, but that we might know that he was borne of a virgin. It is denied that Ioseph had to do with her, vntill shee had brought forth: this also is restrained vnto the same time, but what followed after he doth not declare. It is sufficiently known that such is the vse of the scriptures: and certainly no man will at any time mooue question of this matter, except he be curious: & no man will obstinately stand in the same, except he bee a contentious brabler.

Luke 2,

Matthew

Marke,

1. And it came to passe in those dayes, that there came a commaundement from Augustus Cesar, that all the world shoulde bee taxed.
2. This first taxing was made, when Cyrenius was gouernour of Syria.
3. Therefore went all to be taxed, every man to his owne citie.
4. And Ioseph also went up from Galile out of a cittie called Nazareth, into Iudea, vnto the citie of Dauid, which is called Bethlehem, (because he was of the house and linage of Dauid).
5. To bee taxed with Mary, that was giuen him to wife, which was with child.
6. And so it was that while they were there, the dayes were accomplished that she should be deliuered.
7. And shee brought forth her firste begotten sonne, and wrapped him in swadling clothes, and laid him in a cratche, because there was no roome for them in the Inne.

Luke declareth how it came to passe that Christ should be borne in the cittie of Bethlehem, when that Mary his mother dwelt in an other place, and was now neare vnto her trauell. And first he excludeth all humane counsell, when hee sayth that Ioseph and Mary left their house and came thither, that they might be taxed according to their familie and stocke. If through their owne deuise & counsell, they hadde chaunged their place that Mary might bee deliuered in Bethlehem, then shoulde wee onely haue considered the persons themselues: but now, when that they haue no other purpose, but that they might obey the commaundement of Augustus, wee plainly see that they as blinde folkes were led by the hand of God thither, where it behooued Christ to bee borne. And this seemeth to fall out by fortune, as prophane men ascribe vnto fortune all other things which are not gouerned by the determined counsell of men

But

But it is not sufficient simply to beholde what is done, but wee must also remember what was forespoken by the Prophet many ages before. And this comparison shall evidently shewe, that this tax was not commanded by Augustus Cæsar, and Ioseph and Marie remoued not from their house, that they might at that time come to Bethlehem, without the wonderfull prouidence of God: so we see that sometime the holy children of God, although they wander in mind, not knowing whether they goe, yet they hold the right way, because the Lord directeth their steps: & the wonderfull prouidence of GOD doth no lesse shew it selfe in this, that the tyrannicall gouernment draweth Mary from her house that the prophesie might be fulfilled, God by his prophet had appointed this place (as we shall after see) where he would his sonne should be borne: but if Mary had not by force bin cōpelled, she had determined to haue beene laid at home. Augustus commanded that a tax should be seased in Iuda and that euery man shoulde giue his name, that thence forth they might pay a yearely tribute, which before they were wont to pay to God. So that which God vsed to require of his people, a prophane man doth violently snatch vnto himselfe: and that were as much, as if he should bind the Iewes wholly to himselfe, and should forbid that after that they should be accounted for the people of God. So when the matter was come to vtter despaire, and the Iewes seemed for euer to be cut off and alienated from the gouernment of God: God doeth not onely speedily & beyond the hope of all men, giue a remedie, but hee vseth that wicked tyranny for the redemption: for the gouernour (or whosoever he was that was Cæsar his deputie) while hee executed that which was giuen him in commandement, was the secret messenger of God, to fetch Mary to the place appoynted of God. And certainly to this purpose tendeth the whole historie of Luke, that the faithfull might know that Christ was brought forth from his birth by the hand of God. For this auailleth not a litle for the asurance of faith, that Mary was sodenly and against her owne mind drawn to Bethlehem, that the redeemer might come from thence, as he was promised.

1. *All the world.* This Synecdoche ought not to seeme hard, seeing that it was vsed in diuerse places by the Romane writers: and I doubt not but that this tax was generall throughout all the prouinces, that it might be the more tollerable and not so odious, yet the maner of the tribute might be diuers. That this was the first taxing I interpret, because that the Iewes then as it were thoroughly ramed, had this new and vnaccustomed yoke layd vpon them. For that which some say that it was the first after that Cyrenius was gouernour of Syria, hath no colour in it: for there was a yearely tribute, but the description or taxing was not made euery yeere. Therefore this was the meaning, that the Iewes were then more greiuously oppressed. There is no absurditie in the diuersitie of the Gouernours name, while some call him Cyrenius, some Quirinus or Quirinius: for wee knowe that the Greekes in translating the Latine names, often change somewhat in the pronuntiation. But there ariseth a farre greater difficultie then this from other where: for Iosephus in his eighteenth booke of Antiquities the first chapter, declareth that when Archelaus was banished to Vienna, Quirinus came as Proconsull, who should vnite Iudea to the prouince of Syria.

Also it is agreed vpon amongst the writers, that Archelaus raigned 9. yeares after the death of his father Herod, whereof it is gathered, that there were about thirteene yeare betwene the birth of Christ, and this taxing. For almost all subscribe to Epiphanius, who affirmeth that Christ was born the xxxiii. yeare of the raigne of Herod, that is foure yeares before his death. This also is not a litle doubtfull, that the same Iosephus in the thirde chapter of the 18. booke, sayth that this taxing fell in the 37. yeare after the victorie wonne at Actium. If that bee true, Augustus liued almost seuen yeares longer at the most, so eight or nine yeares shall be detracted from his age. For it appeareth out of the third after Luke, that he had then raigned but fiftene yeare. But seeing it is certayne that the age of Christ is better knowne, then that the same ought to be called into question, so it is not vnlike but that Iosephus had forgotten him selfe in this matter, as also in many others. And truly the Chronicles declare that Quirinus was Confull about nineteene yeares before that Antonius was overcome, and that Augustus enioyed the Empire alone, so hee was a very olde man when hee was sent into the prouince. Obserue that the same Iosephus numbred foure gouernours of Iudea in the space of eight yeares, yet he granteth that the fift gouerned eleuen yeares: that was Valerius Gratus whome Pontius Pilate succeeded. Yet there may be giuen an other answer, that they could not goe through with the taxe: presently as it was commaunded, for Iosephus declareth that Coponius was sent thither with an host, that he might keepe the Iewes vnder, whereof it is easily gathered that through the tumult of the people, this taxe was for a time hindered. And the words of Luke do beare this interpretation, that there came out a commandement about the time of Christes natiuitie for taxing the people: but the description could not be made, except the estate of the kingdome had been changed, because that Iudea was brought into a part of the prouince: so this latter parte was added in steade of correction. This first description was vnder the gouernour Cyrenius: that is, it was then first brought to effect. Though the question is not yet wholly answered. For to what purpose should the people be taxed, when that Herod gouerned Iudea, who payd no tribute to the Romane Empire. I answer there is no absurditie in the matter, if Augustus (that hee might accustom the Iewes to the yoke, whose stubbernesse was sufficiently knowne) woulde also haue them taxed vnder Herode: and the peculiar kingdome of Herode was no hindrance but that the Iewes in the name of a tribute might pay somewhat for euery of their heades to the Romane Empire: for Herode onely raigned by entreatie, and almost seruilcly. I know not from whence Eusebius tooke that which hee sayeth, that this taxing was decreede by the consent of the Senate.

7. *There was no roome for them in the Inne.* Here we see not onely how poore Ioseph was, but also how sharpe that tyrannie was, that no excuse is receiued, but that Ioseph is compelled in that troublesoome time to bring his wife neare vnto her trauell with him. And it is to be supposed that they which came of the kingdome were more sharpely and more reprochfully handled then the rest. Ioseph was not so blockish, but that he was carefull to prouide for the trauel of his wife, and so he would willingly haue elchewed this necessitie.

But because hee could not, enforced, hee giueth place, and commendeth himselfe to God. Yet wee see what a beginning of life the Sonne of God hadde, and in what place and swadling clowtes hee was entertayned. And the maner of his birth was such, beecaufe that to this ende hee tooke our flesh, that for our sakes hee might humble himselfe: therefore hee was cast out into a stable, and layde in a maunger, and hadde the roomthe of a guest denyed him amongst menne, that hee might open heauen for vs, not only as guest-wile, but as an eternall kingdom & an inheritance, and that the Angels should admitte vs into their fellowshippe.

Luke 2.

Matthew

Marke.

8. And there were in the same country shepherdes, abiding in the fieldes, and keeping watch by night because of their flocke.

9. And loe, the Angell of the Lord came vpon them, and the glory of the Lorde shone about them, and they were sore afraide.

10. Then the Angell saide vnto them, Bee not afraide: for beholde, I bring you tydings of great ioy that shall be to all the people.

11. That is, that vnto you is borne this day, in the city of Dauid a Saviour, which is Christe the Lorde.

12. And this shall bee a signe to you, yee shall finde the childe swaddled, and layde in a cratch.

13. And straight way there was with the Angel a multitude of heauenly souldiers praying God, and saying.

14. Glory be to God on high and peace in earth, towards men good will.

8. And there were shepherdes. It should haue beene in vaine to haue Christ borne in Bethlehem, except it were knowne to the world. Yet the maner which Luke describeth seemeth vnlikely in the iudgement of men. First, Christ is reuealed but to a fewe witnesses, and that in the darke night. Then, when God hadde at hand many both honourable and excellent witnesses, which beeing put by, hee chose onely Shepherdes, that is, men contemned and of no estimation. The reason and wisdom of fleshe nist of necessity here become foolish, & let vs confesse, that the foolishnes of God excelleth whatsoeuer is, or seemeth to be wise in this world. 1. Cor. 1. 25. But this also was a part of the humbling of him, nor that any thing of the glory of Christ was by this taken away, but onely that hee shoulde lie hidde for a time. Furthermore, as Paule, 1. Cor. 2. 4. and monisheth, that the Gospell is contemptible according to the flesh, that our sayth might bee grounded in the power of the spirite, and not in high woordes of mans wiledome, or in any glory of the worlde: so GOD from the beginning laide vp this incomparable treasure in fraile vessels, that the obedience of our sayth might the better be proued.

Wherefore if we desire to come to Christe let it not grieue vs, to followe them whom the Lord to the ouerthrowing of the pride of the worlde, hath taken as masters euen out of the filth of the beastes.

9 *The Angell of the Lord came,* Hee sayth that the glory of the Lorde shone about the shepheards, whereby they might know the Angell. For it shoulde haue little auailed to haue that tolde them of the Angell, which is reported by Luke, except God by some visibill signe had w^tnessed that that came from him which they heard. Therefore the Angell appeared vnto them not in any common shape, or without dignitie, but adorned with a brightnesse of heauenly glory, which shoulde moue the mindes of the shepheards, that they might receiue the word which was brought them no otherwise, then as out of the mouth of God himselve. From thence came that feare, whereof Luke presently speaketh, whereby God vs^teth to humble the heartes of men, that hee might gett reuerence to his worde, as I haue before declared.

10. *Be not afraid.* This exhortation tendeth to the taking away and lightening of the feare: for although it be profitable that the mindes of men should be stricken with feare, that they might learne to giue God his honour, yet together with it they haue need of comfort, least they should bee vtterly ouerwhelmed. For it cannot be, but that the maiesty of God shoulde swallow vppe the whole world, if the terrour that it hath in it, were not mixed with some sweetenesse. Therefore the reprobate fall downe halfe dead, because he appeareth to them but as a iudge: but the Angel that he might refresh the minds of the shepheards, testifieth that he was sent for an other end: namely that hee might declare the mercy of God. For this voyce doth not only rayse vp those men that are fallen, but restoreth those that are lost, & calleth backe from death to life, where they heare that God is mercifull to them. But the Angell sayth that he bringeth tidings of great ioy, then he addeth the cause or matter of this ioy, that there is a Saviour borne. By which wordes we are first taught, that vntill men haue peace with GOD, and that they bee reconciled by the grace of Christe, what ioy soeuer they conceiue, is but vaine and deceitfull. The wicked ones doe often triumph with a drunken and a madde mirth: but except there be a cane and a pacifier betweene God and them, of necessity they must needes be miserably tormented with blinde stinges of their consciences. Furthermore, although that flattering and daintily they nourish vp themselues in delights, yet their pleasures are so many tormentes to them. This then is the beginning of a perfect ioy, to feele the fatherly loue of God towardes vs, who onely giueth peace to our mindes. and this is the ioy in the holy Ghost, wherein Paule saith that the kingdō of God doth consist, Rom. 14.17. And that Epithyte of *Great* is therefore added, that wee might not onely knowe that wee shoulde especially ioy in our saluation offered vs in Christ: but that the greatnesse of this good is such and so vnmesurable, that it woorthily recompenceth all the sorowes, griefes, and troubles of this present life. Wherefore let vs learne so to bee satisfied with this one Christ, that the feeling of his grace might exceede all the troubles of the fleshe, yea and at the length abolishe the same. *That shall beto all the people.* Although the Angell speaketh to the shepherdes onely, yet he declareth that this message of saluation which he bringeth them, reacheth

reacheth further , so that not they onely shoulde heare it priuately, but others also shoulde heare the same , Furthermore, obserue that this ioy is sayde to bee common to all people, because it was generally offered to all. For God promised Christ, not to one, or to other, but to al the seed of Abraham.

And that the Iewes, for the most part, were deprived of that ioy, which elonged vnto them, was because of their vnbeliete : as at this day God calleth generally all to saluation by the Gospell, but the vnthankfulnesse of the worlde bringeth to passe, that fewe enioy this grace equally profered to all. Therefore this ioy being included amongst a few, is yet called common in respect of God. But although the Angell speaketh onely of the elect people, yet nowe that the wall is broken downe, the same message belongeth to all mankind for Christe preacheth peace not only to the which are nere: but also to them which are far off, & no lesse vnto strangers, then to the that are of the household. Eph. 2.17. But because that vntill the comming of Christ this couenant was peculier with the Iewes, therefore the Angel seperateth them from all other nations.

11. *Vnto you is borne this day.* Heere is exprest the cause of the ioy , as euen nowe wee declared, that is, because the redeemer, which in times past was promised , is borne : who shoulde restore the Church of God into his estate. And the Angell doth not speake, as of a thing vtterly vnknowne, but he taketh the beginning of his message out of the lawe and the Prophetes : because that it hadde bene in vaine for him to haue vsed this manner of speech to the Gentiles and prophane men. Christe the Lorde to you is borne a Sauour : that same is also the cause why he maketh mention that hee was borne in the Citie of Dauid, which had bene in vaine, but for the renewing of the remembrance of those promises, which were euery where knowne and famous amongst the Iewes . To bee short, the Angell applyeth his speech to his hearers , which were not altogether ignorant of the promised redemption . And hee ioyneth the Gospell with the doctrine of the lawe and the Prophetes, as that which springeth out of that fountaine. But seeing that *Soter* expresth more amongst the Greekes, as Cicero witnesseth, Verrina 4. 109. then Seruator dooth amongst the Lattines: and that there is not extant a latine word, which answereth vnto the same : I haue thought it better to speake barbarously, then to diminish any thing from the power of Christe : And I doubt not but that the common interpreter, and the olde doctours of the Church , hadde the same purpose : therefore is Christe called *Saluator*, as hee which bringeth full saluation. And also this pronovne *to you*, hath a great Emphasis : For it should but smally auayle to heare that a Sauour was borne, except that euery man might apply it, as that hee was borne to him. In this manner speaketh Isayas, chap. 9.6. A childe is borne to vs, a sonne is giuen to vs. So also sayth Zacharyas 9.9. Behelde thy king cometh vnto thee, poore.

12. *And this shall bee a signe vnto you, you shall finde the childe swaddled.* The Angell answereth to that, whereat the Shepheards might haue taken offence, and whereby their fayth might haue bene hindred : for what a mockery is it to see him layde in a stall , which was sent from GOD, as the king and onely Sauour. Therefore least this vile and abiect estate of Christ, should

fear the Shepherdes frō sayth in Christ, the Angel foretelleth them what they shall see. And this order (which to the iudgement of man may seeme absurde, & almost ridiculous) doth the Lord daily vse towards vs. For by the voyce of the Gospell sent downe frō heauen he doth command vs to embrace Christ crucified, and he setteth signes in earthly and transitorie elements, which might lift vs into the glory of blessed immortalitie: so he promising vs a spirituall righteousness, setteth a little water before our eyes, and hee sealeth eternall righteousness to our soule by a small taste of bread and wine. If that the stable offend not the Shepherdes, and that they neuerthelesse seeke their saluation from Christ, and that they submit themselues vnder the gouernment of him, beeing yet but an infant, there ought no signe, be it neuer so contemptible darken his glory with vs: but at the least that we might humbly worship him, sith that he is ascended into heauen, and sitteth at the right hand of the father.

13. *And straight way there was a multitude.* Although that in one Angell there was giuen a shew of Gods glory: yet God would that his sonne should be more royally adorned, & that as well for the confirming of vs, as of the shepherdes. The credit of two or three witness is sufficient amongst men to take away a doubt: but the heauenly hoast with one consent and with one voyce giue testimony to the son of God. Then what a puerenes were it, not to credit the generall testimonie of the angels, whereby our saluation in Christ is witnessed? whereby we gather how detestable this incredulitie is vnto God, which disturbeth this sweete harmony both of heauen & earth? Againe we are to bee condemned of more then beastly blockishnes, if this song (which the Angels with one consent haue song that they in wordes might begin to vs) do not kindle in vs a sayth & an endeavour to prayse God. Adde this also, that the Lord would by this example of heauenly melodie, commend vnto vs the vnitie of faith, and exhort vs with one consent to sing his prayses vpon the earth.

14. *Glory in the highest.* The Angells beginne with thanksgiuing, or with the prayses of God, because that the scripture euery where teacheth vs that wee are redeemed from death, to this ende, that as well in tongue as in works wee might testifie our thankfulness to God. Let vs therefore remembre that this is the hynall cause wherefore God reconciled vs to himselfe by his only begotten son, that the riches of his grace & great mercy being made known, his name might bee glorified. And at this say howe much euery one of vs is strengthened through the knowledge of grace to set forth the glory of God, so much hath he profited in the faith of Christ: yet as oft as mention is made of our saluation, we must know that there is as it were a signe giuen vs, to stirre vs vp to giuing of thanks and prayses vnto God. *In earth peace.* This is the more usuall reading, that then the third clause may follow, *towards men good will.* And although for the summe of the matter there is no great difference, which of the two thou readest: Yet the other interpretation seemeth to agree better, because it is not to be doubted, but that these two clauses agree together, *Glory to God on high, & in earth peace*: but except thou opposelt men vnto God, it cannot be a full Antithesis. Peraduenture this prepositiō *En* deceiued the interpreters: because that the sense of the wordes was very darke, to say peace to be in men. But seeing that in many places of the scripture this preposition is superfluous, there

there is no cause why it should hinder vs. Yet if any had rather place it in the latter clause, the same sense shall still remayne, as I will presently declare. Now it is to be seene what the Angels meane by this worde *peace*: certainly they speake not of the outward peace, which men maintaine betweene themselves, but he sayth that the earth is appeased, when men are reconciled to God, and are quiet in their mindes. We know that we are borne the children of wrath, and by nature that wee are enemies to God: so that it is then necessary that we should be vexed with horrible disquietnes, so long as wee finde God offended with vs: therefore a short and euident definition of peace is to be gathered of the contraries, that is of the wrath of God, and the terrour of death, & so there is a double relation to be had: the one to God, the other to men, because that we haue then peace with God, and he blotting out our guiltines: & not imputing our sinnes, beginneth to be mercifull vnto vs: and we resting in his fatherly loue, doe call vpon him with a sure faith, and without feare wee reioyce in that saluation promised vs. And although that in Iob 7. 1. the life of man vpon earth is called a continuall warfare, and the thing it selfe declareth that there is nothing more troublesome then our estate, while we remaine here in the world, yet the Angels expressly place peace on the earth, that wee might know that no troubles can hinder vs, but that we enjoying the grace of Christ, might haue settled and quiet minds. Therefore let vs remember that there is a seat of peace placed euen in the midst of the stormes of temptations, amongst diuers dangers, amongst violent tempests, in the midst of battels & feares, least our faith being driuen backe with any of these engines, shoulde wauer or waxe faine.

Good will. I know not how it came to passe, that it was put in the genitiue case: certainly the common translation, which hath *vnto men of good will*, ought not onely to be forsaken as adulterous, but because it corrupteth the whole sense. Yet many are deceiued also, which reading it in the nominatiue case, *good will*, doe referre the same to men, as if it were an exhortation to them to embrace the grace of Christ. I grant that it is no otherwise confirmed, then as God offereth his peace vnto vs, except that we receiue the same. But seeing that *Eudokia* is taken in euery place in the scriptures, for that which the Hebrewes call *desun* the old interpreter translated it *Beneplacitum*. This place is very ill expounded of the accepting of grace. But that which the Angels speake of, doeth rather shew the fountaine of peace, that we might know that it is a free gifte, and to flow out of the meere mercie of God. If you please to read it *Good will in men*, it shall not bee amisse in respecte of the sense: for in this manner of speech the cause of the peace shall also be noted: that is, that God freely accepteth men into his fauour, with whom he before had warlike or deadly discorde. If thou wilt read peace of good will, for willing, I will not be against this exposition: yet that is the plainest to haue *Eudokian* put appositively, that wee might know from whence peace commeth to vs.

Luke 2.

Mathew.

Marke.

15. And it came to passe, when the Angels were gone away fro them into heauen, that the Shephards said one to another, let vs go then vnto Bethlehem, and see this thing that is come to passe, which the Lord hath shewed vnto vs.

16. So they came with haste, and founde both

Mary.

Mary and Ioseph, and the babe layd in the cratch.

17 And when they had seene it, they published abroad the thing, which was told them of that child.

18. And all that heard it wondred at the things which were told them of the Shepheards.

19. But Mary kept all these sayings, and pondered them in her heart.

20. And the Shepherdes returned, glorifying and praying God, for all that they had hearde and seene, as it was spoken vnto them.

21. And when the eight dayes were accomplished, that they should circumsise the childe, his name was then called Iesus, which was so named of the Angel, before he was conceaued in the wombe.

15. After the Angels were gone away. Heere is the obedience of the Shepherdes described vnto vs: for when the Lord had appointed them as witnesses of his Sonne to all the world, hee effectually spake to them by the Angels, least that shoulde bee forgotten, which was tolde them. It was not plainly and by word commaunded them, that they shoulde come to Beth'lehem: but because that they sufficiently vnderstoode that the counsell of GOD was so, they make hast to Christ, as at this day, when we know that Christ is shewed vnto vs, to this ende, that our hearts by faith might come vnto him, our loytering cannot bee excused.

And Luke doth not in vaine declare that the Shepherds tooke counsell of their journey alsoone as the Angels were departed, least wee suffer (as many vse) the word of God to vanish away with the sound, but that it may take liuely rootes in vs, and thereby that it may bring forth his fruite, when it hath ceased to sound in our eares. Furthermore, it is to bee noted, that the Shepherdes doe mutually exhort one an other: for it is not sufficient for euery one of them to looke to themselues, except that also there be vsed mutuall exhortations. Luke amplifieth the prayse of their obedience, when hee sayeth that they made hast, euen as a promptnes of faith is also required of vs. Which the Lord hath shewed vnto vs. Very skilfully and rightly doe they ascribe that to God, which they heard not but from the Angell, for, whom they acknowledge as the minister of God: they also thinke worthy of that authorite, as if he had put on the person of our Lord. Therefore for this cause doth the Lord call vs backe often vnto himselfe, least the maiestie of his word should become of no estimation in the sight of men. Again we see heere, that they account it to be an offence in them to neglect that treasure shewed them of the Lorde: for of that knowledge reuealed to them they argue that they must goe to Beth'lehem, that they may see. And so it behoueth euery one of vs, according to the measure of his faith and vnderstanding to bee prepared to follow whether as God calleth.

16. They found Mary. That truly was an vnseemely sight, and by that onely they might haue bene driuen from Christ: for what is there more vnlkely, then to beleue that hee shoulde bee king of all the people, who

who was not accounted worthy of a meane place among the common people? and to hope for the restitution, and saluation of the kingdome from him, who for his want and pouerty was throwne out into a stable? Yet Luke writeth that none of these things hindered the Shepherdes, but that with great admiration they prayed God: namely because that the glory of GOD was thoroughly fixed in their eyes, & the reuerence of his word printed in their minds, that whatsoeuer they mette with either infamous or contemptible in Christ, they with the height of their faith do easily passe ouer the same. Neither is there any other cause why euery of those small offences doe either hinder or turne our faith from the right course: but because that wee taking small hold vpon God, are easily drawn hether & thither. For if this one cogitatio possessed all our senses, that we haue a certaine and a faithfull witnesse from heauen, it were a defence strong and stable enough against all kinde of temptations, and it shoulde well enough foriſe vs against all offences.

17. *They published abroad the thing which was told them.* Luke commendeth the faith of the Shepherdes, in that they deliuered sincerely through their hands, that which they receiued from the Lord: & it is profitable that the same should be witnessed for all our sakes, that they might be, as second Angels for the confirming of our faith. Againe, Luke teacheth that they reported that which they had heard not without profit. And it is not to be doubted, but that the Lord gaue effect to their word, least it should be mocked or despised. For the estate of the mendiscredited the matter, & the matter it selfe might seeme to be but fabulous. But the Lord suffereth not those things to be in vaine, which he enioyneth them. And although this manner of working finally pleaseth the iudgement of men, that the Lordes will is that his word should be heard of poore & meane men: yet it is approoued of God himselfe, and vsed partly to humble the pride of flesh, & partly to proue the obedience of the faith: but that all men maruaile, and no man moueth his foote, that he might come to Christ: hercof it may be gathered, that they hearing of the power of God were amazed, not being stricken with any earnest affection of the heart: wherefore this word was not so much spread abroad for their saluation, as that the ignorance of all the people might be inexcusable.

19. *Mary kept all these.* The diligence of Marie in considering the woorkes of GOD is proposed to vs for two causes. First, that we might knowe that the keeping of this treasure was layde vp in her heart, that, that which shee had layde vp with her, shee might publish the same to others in time conuenient. Next, that all the godly might haue an example which they might followe. For if wee be wise, this ought to be the especiall trauell, and the chiefe studie of our life that wee might be diligent to consider the woorkes of God, which shoulde builde vp our faith. Furthermore, the worde *conserue* is referred to the memorie: and *Symballein* doth else signifie to conserue, as to make vp one perfect body, by gathering all things together, which agreed amongst themselves to proue the glory of Christe. And Mary coulde not wisely consider the value of all things together, but by conseruing some things with others.

20. *Glorifying and praysing of God.* This also appertaineth to the common

vse of our sayth, that the Shepheards might certainly know it to be the worke of God. And the earnest glorifying of God which is prayſed in the, is a certaine ſecret reproofe of our ſluggiſhneſſe, or rather of vnthankfulneſſe: for if the ſwa-thing cloutes of Chriſte ſo much preuailed amongſt them, that they could riſe out of the ſtable and cratch euen vnto heauen: how much more effectuall ought the death and reſurrection of Chriſt be with vs that wee might be liſted vp to God. For Chriſt was not onely liſted vp from the earth, that hee might draw all things after him: but hee ſitteth at the right hand of the Father, that wee which are pilgrims in this world, might with our whole hearts meditate of the heauenly life. But Luke declareth the true nature of godlines, when hee ſayth that the witneſſe of the Angell was in ſteede of a rule to the Shepheardes, to the which they directed all things. For then is ſayth rightly holpe by the workes of God, if it directeth all things to that purpoſe, that the truth of God, which is reuealed in his word may more clearly ſhine forth.

21. *That the childe ſhould be circumciſed.* That which generally is to be conſidered of circumciſion, let the readers fetch out of Gen. 17. 10. It ſhall be ſufficient at this time briefly to touch thoſe things, which belong to the perſon of Chriſt, God would that his ſonne ſhould be circumciſed, that he might be ſubject to the law: for circumciſion was a ſolemne ſigne, wherewith the Iewes were initiated into the obſeruation of the law. Paule declareth the end, Gal. 4. 4. when he ſayth that he was made vnder the law, that he might redeeme them which were vnder the law. Therefore Chriſt taking circumciſion profeſſed him ſelfe a ſeruant of the law, that he might obtaine libertie for vs. And ſo by this meanes not onely the ſeruitude of the law was aboliſhed by him: but the ſhadow of the ceremony was applyed to his ſound and perfect body, that it might ſoone take an end. For although the abrogating of it depended of the death & reſurrection of Chriſt, yet this was a certaine beginning of the ſame, that the ſon of God ſuffered himſelfe to be circumciſed *His name was the called Ieſus.* This place alſo witneſſeth, that it was a manner receiued amongſt the Iewes, that on the day of circumciſion, they gaue names to their children, as wee at this day uſe to doe at baptiſme. But the Euangelist noteth two things, that the name of Ieſu was not giuen vnto the ſonne of God, raſhly or for the pleaſure of men, but that the Angell brought it from heauen: Then that Ioeſeph and Mary obeyed the commaundement of God: and this is the content of our ſayth with the worde of God, that that word going before, we ſhould ſpeake to the ſame, and our ſayth ſhoulde anſwer to his promiſes. Eſpecially Luke commendeth vnto vs the order of publiſhing of the word, when he ſayth that ſaluation was teſtified by the mouth of men, which was promiſed by the Angell from aboue through the grace of Chriſt.

Matth. 2.

1. *When Ieſus then was borne at Bethlechem in Iudea, in the dayes of Herode the king: behold there came wiſe men from the Eaſt to Ieruſalem,*

2. *Saying where is the king of the Iewes that is borne? for we haue ſeene his ſtarre in the Eaſt,*

and

Marke.

Luke.

and are come to worship him.

3. When king Herod heard this, hee was troubled, and all Ierusalem with him:

4. And gathering together all the cheife Priests and Scribes of the people, he asked of them where Christ should be borne.

5. And they sayd vnto him, at Bethlehem in Iudea for so it is written by the Prophet:

6. And thou Bethlehem in the land of Iuda art not the least among the princes of Iuda: for out of thee shall come the gouernour, that shall feede my people Israel.

1. When Iesus was then borne. Matthew concealeth the cause why Christ was borne at Bethlehem: but the spirite of God, who had appoynted the Euangelistes as his Scribes, seemeth aduisedly so to moderate their stile, that with most notable consent, they all write one and the same historie, though it be in diuers maners: that thereby the truth of God might be the more certaine and euident, when as it was openly manifest, that his witnessess did not purposely before consent to speak, but euery one seperate fro other, nor hauing one respect of an other, did simply and fiely write that, which the spirit taught them.

Furthermore, heere is a hiltory declared worthy to be remembered, that God fetched wisemen out of Chaldaea or Persia, which should come into Iudea to worship Christ, where he lay without honour, and contemned. Truly a wonderfull counsell of God, that God would his Sonne shoulde come forth into the world vnder this obscure humilitie: yet he excellently adorned him, as with phrases, so with other tokens, least any thing for the trial of our faith had bin wanting from his diuine maiestie: yet heere is to be noted a notable harmonie of things seeming to be repugnant. The starre from heauen declareth him to be a king, whose throne is the beastes stall, because that he is denied a place euen amongst the common sort of men. His maiestie shineth in the East, which notably appeared not in Iudea, but is also defiled with many reproches. To what purpose is this: namely, the heauenly fathers will was to appoynt that the star and the wise men should lead vs the right way to his sonne: but yet hee stripped him naked of all earthly honour, that we might know his kingdome to be spiritual. Wherefore this storie is not only profitable, because that god brought these wise men to his sonne, as the first fruites of the Gentiles: but also because hee would set forth the kingdome of his sonne, as with the prayse of them, so of the starre for the helpe of our faith, least the wicked and malicious despite of his owne nation, should cause him to be despised of vs.

It is sufficiently knowne, that the Astrologers and Philosophers with the Persians and the Chaldeans were called Magi (i. wisemen.) Therefore it is easily to be coniectured that these came out of Persia. Furthermore, howe many they were in number, it is better not to knowe, because the Euangelist doth not expresse it, then rashly to affirme for certaine, that which is doubtful.

A childish error lead the Papistes. that they imagined them to bee three, because Mathew sayth that th y offered gold, frāckencense and murrh. as if hee should distinctly assigne a proper office to euery of them, and that rather hee should not declare that these three things were generally offered by them Who soeuer that old writer was, whose vnperfect commentarie vpon Mathew beareth the name of Chrysostome, & is accounted amongst Chrysostomes workes sayth that they were foueteene: which hath no more colour, except that peraduenture it came by tradition of the fathers, yet that same also hath no assurance. But the Papistes are more then ridiculous, which imagined to themselves that they were kings, because they did read that before sayd. Psal. 72.10. That the kinges of Tharsis, of the Iles and of Saba should come, which should offer gifts to the Lord: Verily they are wise workemen, who that they might giue a newe shape to men, they haue beguinat the turning of the worlde: for of the South and West they haue made the East.

And it is not to be doubted, but that by the iust reuenge of God, they were so amazed, that their grosse ignorance might be laid open to the reprove of all men, who made no religion to corrupt the truth of God, and to turne the same into a lie. But here is first demaunded, whether this starre was one of the number of them, which the Lord in the beginning created, for the garnishing of heauen: then whether the knowledge of Astrologic brought these wise men hither, that thereby in minde they conceiued the birth of Christ. Although we may not contentiously strine of these matters, yet it is to be gathered out of the wordes of Mathew, that it was not a naturall starre, but extraordinary: for it was not by the course of nature, that at certaine times it vanished away, and after sodainly shone againe: then that it went a straight course towards Bethlehem, and at the length that it stoode fixed ouer the house wherein Christ was none of which things agreeth to natural stars. It is more probable that it was like to a Comer, and that it was seene in the ayre, rather then in heauen. And it is no absurditie, that Mathew speaking according to the maner of the people improperly called it a starre: hereof is almost gathered an answer of the second question. For seeing it is certaine, that Astrologic is contained within the boundes of nature, the wise men could not by the onely direction of the same haue come to Christ: therefore it behoued them to be holpen by a secrete reuelation of the spirite: yet I deny not but that they had some beginning or feede out of the arte: but I say it was necessary that the same shoulde bee holpe with some new and extraordinary reuelation, least it should be in vaine or vanish away.

2. *Where is hee that is borne king?* That some interpreters thinke a king borne, to be secretly opposed against a king made or created, seemeth to mee to bee too subtil: therefore I take it more simply that the wise men meane that this king was lately borne, and remayneth yet an infant, that they might make a difference betweene him and a king growne in age, and holding the government of the people: for presently they say, that they were moued neyther with the fame of his actes, or with his present greatnesse openly knowne, but by a diuination from heauen, of a thing that was to come. But seeing that the sight of the starre was so effectually

effectuall with the wisemen, woe bee to our sluggishnes, which so coldely seeke Christ the king reuealed vnto vs.

We come to worship him. The starre was shewed to this end, that it might draw the wisemen into Iudea, that they might be witnesses and proclaimers of the new king. But for that which appertaineth to them, they came not to giue any godly worship to Christ, as is due to the Sonne of God, but after the Persian manner, they would salute him as a most excellent king. For it is not probable that they thought more of him, then that he should be endued with singular power and dignitie, that he might worthily turne all men into admiration and reuerence of him. For it may be, that they would before hand get his fauour, that they might haue him freindly and fauourable to them : If peraduenture it came to passe, that he obtained the gouernment of the East.

3. *Herod the king was troubled.* Herod was not ignorant of the propheties, wherein the Iewes had a king promised them, who should restore their afflicted and ouerthrowne conditions into a happy estate. For he had from a childe liued in that kingdome, and had perfectly learned all their matters. Adde also that this rumour was so spread, that it could not bee vnknowne to the people which dwelt neere about them : yet he is troubled as it were with a newe matter, vnheard of before : that is, because hee distrusting God and his promises, thought it but vaine to hope for a redeemer, especially seeing he imagined (as proud men vse to doe) with a foolish confidence, that hee had established the kingdome to him and to his. But seeing he being drunken in his owne felicitie had before in his securitie contemned the propheties, now he is sodainely feared with the remembrance of them. For he should not so much haue been moued with the simple speech of the wisemen, if the oracles or propheties had not come into his minde, which before seemed to be as toyes, and of no importace so the Lord after he hath suffered the vnbeleeuers to sleepe, sodainly he shaketh them out of their rest. That which Mathew saith, that Ierusalem also was troubled, may be expounded two waies : eyther that with the sodaine noueltie of the matter, the citizens were tumultuously rayfed vp, as if that they very desirously receiued the ioyfull message of the king that was borne then : or that they being accustomed to mischeifes, and through long patience being couered with vnseñsiblenesse, feared a change, least that greater calamitie shoulde rise thereof. For they were so worne and almost consumed with continuall wars, that a miserable and cruell seruitude ioyned with peace, was not onely tolerable, but was also to be wished for of them : whereby it is to be perceiued how ill they had profited vnder the whippes of God. For they were so benumbed with amasednes, that the promised redemption & saluation after a sort stanck before them. And I doubt not but that Mathew would haue their vnthankfulness noted : for that they being tired with a wearines of euils, had throwne away the hope and desire of grace promised them.

4. *Gathering together the cheife Priestes.* Although there was no speach at all of Christ in Herodes Court, yet assoone as the wise men hadde made mention of a King, the propheties came into their minde, which before were forgotten : so Herod presently coniectureth, this king, for whom the wise men seeke, to bee that Messias in times past promised from the Lord.

And here againe it appeareth, that Herod was wonderfully afraid, While that hee so carefully enquireth: and no mannaile for seeing that all tyrants are fearefull, and that their owne crueltie strikes more feare into themselves, then it doth vnto others: It behoueth Herod to be afraid about all other, as one that perceiued himselfe to raigne against the Lord. Furthermore, this newe inquisition declareth how grosse the contempt of Christ was before the coming of the wise men. That the Scribes and high Priestes doe sincerely answer out of the scripture (who yet after furiously endeouored to corrupt the whole scripture, least they should giue any testimonie or credite to Christ) is therefore done because that as yet Christ had not troubled them with his Gospell: so all the wicked ones do easily subscribe to God in all generall principles: but when the truth of God doth vrge them neerer, then they vomit forth the poyson of their contumacie: of the which thing at this day we haue a notable example in the Papistes: for without controuersie they confesse that Christ is the onely begotten sonne of God, clothed with our flesh, and they acknowledge in the two natures one person of God and man. But when we come to the power & office of Christ, there presently riseth a conflict: because they will not suffer themselves to be brought into order, much lesse to be brought to nothing. In summe as farre as the wicked thinke that nothing is taken from themselves, so much reuerence they will grant to God and to the scripture. But when that Christ hand to hand itrineth with ambition, couetousnes, pride, vaine hope, hypocrisie, and deceites, then forgetfull of all modestie, they are caried into madnes. Therefore let vs know that wicked affections are the cheife cause of blinding the enemies of the truth, which turne light into darkenesse.

6. *And thou Bethlehem.* It is not to bee doubted, but that the Scribes did faithfully cite the wordes of the text in their owne tongue, as it is in the Prophet: but it was enough for Mathew to note the place: and because that hee writ in Greeke, he followed the allowed translation. For by this place and such others it is easily gathered, that the Gospell was not written by him in the Hebrew tongue. Furthermore, this is alwayes to bee obserued, as oft as the Apostles doe cite any testimonie of Scripture, although they render it not worde for worde: nay, sometime they are farre from the same: yet they are very aptly and silyly applied of them to the matter. Wherefore let the readers alwayes marke to what purpose the Euangelistes bring the places of Scripture, let them not stand scrupulously vpon euery word, but let them bee content with this one thing, that the Scripture is neuer wrested by them into a diuerse sense: but that it is properly applied to the peculiar and proper vse. And certainly seeing it was their purpose to giue milke to drinke to infants and nouices in the fayth, which were not yet able to take sounde meate: no religion staide them that lesse diligently & exactly they should enquire what the scripture teacheth of the Sonne of God, and so that taste which the Apostles giue them, should leade them to the fontaine. Now let vs returne to the prophesie of Micheah. These are the wordes that are read in the Prophet, and thou Bethlehem Ephrathah art little to bee among the thousands of Iudah: yet out of thee shall hee come forth vnto me, that shall be the ruler in Israel. Mathew for Ephrathah putteth Iuda, but in the same sense: for the minde of Mich-

Micheah was onely by this note, to put a difference betweene this Bethlehem, whereof he speaketh, & that other in the tribe of Zabulon There is more difficultie in the rest of the text: for the Prophet sayth that Bethlehem is litle, that it should be accounted amongst the gonerours in Iuda. Mat. on the other side extolleth the dignitie, as that it should be one of the chiefe. This cause moued many interpreters that they reade this place of the Prophet interrogatiuely: yet some of a better iudgement thought that Matthew woulde in this chaunge for forth the prayse of the grace of God: because that this poore & obscure towne was made a place of the birth of this great king. But although that Bethlehem excelled in this honor, yet it profited nothing the dwellers ther, so that it rather fell into a griuouiser destruction, because that the redeemer was worse thē vnworthily receiued thither. Mat. also for a rular putteth this word shepheard: yet he expresseth both two, for that he declareth that Christ should be the capitaine of the people, and that the office of feeding was committed vnto him.

Matthew. 2.

7. Then Herode priuily called the wise men, and diligently enquired of them, the time of the star that appeared.

8. And sent thē to Bethlehem: saying, go & search diligently for the babe, & when ye haue found him bring me word againe, that I may come and worship him.

9. So when they had heard the king, they departed, and loe, the star which they had seene in the East, went before them, till it came, and stood ower the place where the babe was.

10. And when they sawe the starre, they reioyced with an exceeding great ioy.

11. And went into the house, and founde the babe with Mary his mother, and fell downe and worshipped him, and opened their treasures, and presented vnto him gifts, euen gold, and incense, and mirrh.

12. And after they were warned of God in a dream, that they should not goe againe to Herod, they returned into their counreiy another way.

Marke.

Luke.

7. Herod priuily called the wise men. The tyrant durst not shew his feare & carefulness, least he should so arme the people with audacitie, with whom hee knewe himselfe hated: therefore openly he dissembled the cause as though it pertained not to him. But priuily hee inquireth, that he may preuent the present perill. But although an euill conscience made him fearefull, yet it is not to bee doubted but that strok his mind with an vnusual feare, that being destitute of counsell, & distraught in mind, hee was for the time amazed. For there is no easier matter, thē vnder the clok of humaitie to suborne a cōpanion from amongst the courtiers, which espying out the whole matter, might presētly return. certainly Herod was wōderful subtil, & ther was in him a rare magnanimity, so that it is the more to be wōdred at, now in so extreame daunger, whē as he had a remedy at hād, that he should lie a stonished & half dead: wherefore we may know that

it was wonderfull, that the sonne of God did then escape the iawes of the Lyon. And the Lord at this day doth no lesse bewitch his enemies, least they shoulde deuile a thousand sleights to hurt & to destroy his Church: nay, that they often take not the occasions which are in a readinesse. And the Lorde by another meanes, as we shal see, laughed to scorne and mocked the subtiltie, wherewith he had deceived the wise men, faigning that he himselfe would come to worshippinge him. But as Herod fearing the tumult of the people, was bereft of his minde, so againe he was so madde, that hee did neither doubt nor feare, to stirre vp God against himselfe: for he knew that if a king was borne, that he was ordained of God, that he might raise vp the decayed throne of Dauid. Therefore he sets not vpon men, but foolishly he presumes to warre with God: Both therefore is to be noted, that he was taken with a spirit of giddines, that he might strike God: yet hee delt very childishly, because his counsell was brought to nought, so that he was euen as a blinde man, which gropeth in the darke.

9. *When they had heard the king, they departed.* Truly this was a vile sluggishnesse of the Iewes, that none of them kept company with these strangers, that they might goe see the king promised to their nation. The Scribes shewe them the way, and assigne the place where hee is borne, yet they suffer them to goe alone, and no man stirreth foote. Peraduenture they feared the crueltie of Herod: but this was also a wicked vnthankfulnesse, that they woulde incurre no daunger, for the obtayning of the saluation offered them, and that they set lesse by the grace of God, then by offending the tyrant. But I shewed a little before, that the whole people were too much degenerate, which had rather be oppressed with a yoke of tyranny, then that by the chaung they would feele any discommoditie. And if God had not confirmed with his spirite the mindes of these wise men, they might haue fallen at this offence: yet the zeale of their endeouour is not diminished, but forward they go without a companion. But they want not matter to confirme their faith, while they nowe heare him renowned as king by diuine oracles, who was shewed vnto them by the starre. That the starre directeth them as they went on their way, euen vnto the place, it may be easily gathered, that it vanished away before: for no other cause, but that they might enquire at Ierusalem for the newe king: and that to take away excuse from the Iewes, which after they were taught of the redeemer sent vnto them, yet vntruly and willingly despised him.

11. *They found the babe.* So vncomly a sight might haue bred a new offence to the wisemen, when as they saw nothing in Christ that appertained to a king, so that he was viler vsed & more contemned, then any comon infant. But because they are perswaded that he is appointed of God to be a king, this only thought fixed in their mindes, causeth the to reuerence Christ: for in the counsell of God they do behold his dignitie, as yet hid and kept secret. And because they certainly appoint that he shall proue other wise then he yet appeared, they are no whit ashamed to giue him kingly honour. Also by their gifts they declared whence they came, for it is not to be doubted, but that they brought these as tokens and fruits of their countrey. & vnderstand that every one of the did not offer his gift, but these 3. things were in comon offered by the all, that which almost all the interpreters dispute of the kingdō, priesthod & burial of Christ, & make gold a token of his king-

kingdom, incense of his priesthood, and mirrh, of his buriall, in my iudgement hath no liklihoode in it. We know that it was a solemne custome amongst the Persians to haue some gift in their hand so oft as they saluted their kinges. And these wise men chose these three things, the fruits & commodities whereof doe make the East part renowned & famous. Euen as Iacob sent into Egypt the best & chosen fruites of the land, Gen. 43. 12 But seeing they after the maner of the Persians, worshipping him, whom they as yet thought, to be an earthly King, offered fruites of the earth: It is our part spiritually to worship him. For this is that lawfull and reasonable worshipping, which he desireth: first, that we should offer vp our selues vnto him, and then all that we haue.

Luke. 2.

Matthew

Marke.

22. And when the dayes of their purification after the law of Moses were accomplished, they brought him to Ierusalem, to present him to the Lord.

23. (As it is written in the law of the Lord, euery man childe that first openeth the wombe, shall bee holy vnto the Lord.)

24. And to giue an oblation, as it is commanded in the law of the Lord, a paire of Turtle doves, or two young Pigeons.

25. And beholde there was a man in Ierusalem, whose name was Simeon: this man was iust, and feared God, and waited for the consolation of Israell, and the holy Ghost was vpon him.

26. And a reuelation was giuen him of the holy Ghost, that he should not see death, before he had seene the Lord Christ.

27. And he came by the motion of the spirite into the temple, and when the parents brought in the childe Iesus, to doe for him after the custome of the law:

28. Then he tooke him in his armes, and prayed God, and sayd.

29. Lord, now lettest thou thy seruant depart in peace, according to thy word:

30. For mine eyes haue seene thy saluation.

31. Which thou hast prepared before the face of all people.

32. A light to be reuealed to the Gentiles, and the glory of the people Israell.

22. And when the dayes were accomplished. The fourtie day after her deliuerance, the rite of purification ought to be solemnised: yet Mary and Ioseph came also to Ierusalem for an other cause, that they might preset Christ to the Lord, because he was the first borne. Now, first we must speak of purification. Luke maketh the same comon to Mary & to Christ: for the pronoun *Their* can by no meanes be applied vnto Ioseph. And it is not absurd, that Christ, who for vs became accursed vpon the crosse, for our sake tooke our vncleaneesse vpon him, though

he was free from fault and sinne, as concerning the guiltines: that is, if the fault of puritie would be accounted vncleane, that he might wash away our vncleannes. They are deceiued, which thinke that this law was but for pollicy: as if the woman should be vncleane before her husband, and not before the Lorde: when rather there was set before the eyes of the Iewes, as well the corruptiō of their nature, as the remedie of God his grace. And this one lawe abundantly sufficeth to proue originall sinne, as it containeth a noble testimonie of the grace of God. And the curse of mankind cannot be more plainly shewed, then whē the Lord testifieth, that the infant cometh vnpure & polluted out of his mothers wombe in so much as the mother her selfe is defiled by the birth. Certainly except man were borne a sinner, & were by nature the child of wrath, & that there rested in him so ne spot of sinne, he should not neede a purgation: wherefore it followeth that all were corrupt in Adam, seeing that they are by the mouth of the Lord condemned of vncleannes. And that is not against it. *Rom. 11. 10.* That the Iewes are called holy branches of a holy roote, because this good came vnto them not of themselves, but as by other meanes. For although that by priueledge of adoption they were seuered for a chosen people, yet corruption from Adam was their first inheritance by order. Therefore it is conuenient to distinguish betweene the first nature and the peculiar benefite of the couenaut, wherein God freeth his from the curse. And to this purpose belonged the purification in the lawe, that the Iewes might know: that by the grace of GOD they are cleanse from those filths, which by their birth they brought with them into the world. Hereby is also to be learned how horrible the infection of sinne is, which in some parte deileth the lawfull order of nature. Verily I grant, that neyther matrimonie in it selfe, nor bearing of children are vncleane: nay, I grant that the fault of lust is couered with the holines of matrimonie: but yet the ouerflowing of sinne is so deepe and plentifull, that alwaies some sins flow out from thence, which sprinkle with blots, whatsoever is otherwise pure.

23. *As it is written in the law.* This was an other parte of godlines which Ioseph and Mary performed: The Lord commanded, *Num. 3. 13.* that all the males should be offered to him in remembrance of their deliuerance, because when the Angell slew all the first borne of Egypt, he had spared the first borne of Israell: after it was lawfull for euery man to redeeme his first borne for a certaine price. That was an old ceremonie.

Now sith the Lord is a common redeemer of all, by right he challengeth vs to him from the least to the greatest. Surely it is not in vaine that Luke doeth oft repeat, that Ioseph and Mary did that which was prescribed in the law of the Lord. For by these words we are taught, that nothing is to be attempted after our own wit in the worship of God, but that must be obediently followed, which he hath by his word commanded.

24. *And to giue an oblation.* This sacrifice belonged to the rite of purifying, least any shoulde thinke that it was offered for the redeeming of the first borne. When the Euangelist nameth a pair of turtle doves, or two pigeons, hee taketh it for granted, that the pouertie of Ioseph and Mary was such, that their abilitie reached not to the offering of a Lambe. For this exception is plainly set downe, *Leuit. 12. 6.* If any object that there

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was golde offered a little before by the wisemen, wherewith they might haue bought it: I answer, wee cannot imagine that there was such plentie of golde, as could sodainly make a poore man rich. For we reade not that they had Camels laden with golde: but it is more credible, that it was some small portion, which they brought onely for honours sake. Neyther did the lawe precisely commaund that the poore should consume their substance vpon a sacrifice: but making a difference betweene them and the rich, it eased them of charge. Wherefore it shall bee nothing hurtfull, if wee say that Ioseph and Mary gaue as much as their abilitie did beare, although that they had layde vp some money, to beare the charges of the iourney and of their life.

25. Behold, there was a man in Ierusalem. This history is set downe, that wee might know, that when almost all the people had prophaned themselues with a wicked contempt of God, yet there remained a few worshippers of God, and Christ was known of them from his first infancie. These were those remnantes which (as Paul to the Ro. 11. 5. teacheth) were reserved, according to the free election of God. And in this small handfull was the Church of God included, although the priestes & Scribes did no lesse proudly then falsely boast of the title of the church. The Euangelist only maketh mentio of two, which knew Christ at Ierusalem, whē he was brought into the temple, Simeon & Anna. And first I must speake of Simeon. We read not of what estate he was, & it may be, that he was some meane man, and vnknowne: But Luke commendeth him for godlinesse and righteousness, to the which hee addeth the gift of Prophecie, Godlinesse and righteousness are referred to the two Tables of the lawe, and so in these two poyntes consisteth the integritie of life. It was a testimony of godlinesse that he looked for the comfort of Israell: for without the hope of saluation God is not rightly worshipped, which dependeth partly in beleeuing his promises, then especially by the restoration promised by Christ. But now seeing this wayting or looking for is prayed in Simeon, as a rare vertue, hereof gather, that there were then but few, which truly nourished the hope of redemption in their heartes. All men had in their mouthes the Messias, and the blessed state vnder the kingdome of Dauid: but in the meane while almost no man did patiently beare the present miseries, staying vpon this comfort, that the redemption of the Church was at hand. And as the godlines of Simeon in this did shew it selfe, that he lift vp his mind in wayting for the promised saluation, so at this day, as many as will proue theselues the sons of God, will sigh with continuall desires for the promise of redemption. For sufferance is very needfull euen to the last coming of Christ. *The holy Ghost was vpon him.* He speaketh not of the spirit of adoption, which is comon to all the children of God; though not in equall maner: but he speaketh of a more peculiar gift of prophecie, which doth more plainly appeare in the next verse, & by that which followeth, where it is sayd, that he receiued answer by the holy Ghost, & that the saie spirit guiding him, he came into the temple. Therefore although that Simeon exceeded not in any publike honor, yet he was adorned with many notable gifts: as godlines, innocencie of life, sayth & prophecie. And it is not to be doubted, but that he alone did priuately receiue this oracle, that it might passe from him as a comon confirmation to all the godly. Iesus is called the Christe of GOD. because that he was annoynted of the Father, and together with the holy Ghost

he tooke the honour of the kingdome & of the priesthood. Simeon is saide to haue come into the temple by the spirit: that is, by secret instinct and certaine reuelation that he should meete Christe.

29. *Now leste if thou thy seruant departe.* By this songe it appeareth that Simeon beheld the sonne of God with other eyes, then with the eyes of the flesh: for the outward beholding of Christ coulde bring nothing but a contempt, at the least it could not so haue satisfied the minde of the holy man, that so glad as enioying the summe of all his desires, he should make haste to die. Therefore the spirit of God lightened his eyes with fayth, that he might discerne the glory of the sonne of God in that vile & condemned habite. Whe he saith that he would depart in peace, he vnderstandeth that he would die with a quiet minde, as hee that was filled, & had obtained his desires. But it is demanded if he should haue died before, should Simeon haue bin drawne to it with trouble and tumult, as they vse that are vnrilling? I answere, the circumstance which is added, is to be noted, *according to thy word.* For seeing God hath promised him the sight of his Son, it was fit he should stay in suspence: nay, it behooued him to liue carefully, vntill that he was made partaker of his hope. This is therefore to be obserued, because that many falsly & naughtely doe pretend the example of Simeon, boasting that they would willingly die, if it were granted them to enioy this or that matter, when as yet they take liberty to themselves to conceaue vowes according to their owne lusts, or to forge vaine hopes without the word of God. If Simeon had said precisely now with a staied & a quiet minde I will die, because I haue seene the sonne of God, in this speech he had bevrayed the weakness of his fayth: but because he had the word for it, it was lawfull for him, according to the rule of fayth, to flee death vntill the coming of Christ.

30. *Because mine eyes haue seene.* Although this maner of speaking is often seene in the scriptures, yet the corporal beholding of Christ seemeth expressly to be noted in these wordes: as if Simeon shoulde say, that hee nowe had the sonne of God present in the flesh, vpon whome hee had bent the eyes of his mind before. I take saluation for the matter of saluation, because that all the parts of saluation and of a blessed life are laid vp in Christ. Now if the only sight of Christ, being as yet but an infant, did so much preuaile with Simeon, that ioyfully & quietly he would go to death: how much more abundant matter of saluation is there giuen to vs this day, who may see all the pointes of our saluation fulfilled in Christ. Christ is not conuersant vpon the earth, neither doe we beare him in our armes, but his diuine maiesty doth clearly & openly shine in the Gospel, & therein he sheweth himselfe to be seene of vs, as it were face to face, as Paule saith, 2. Cor. 3. 18. neither sheweth he himselfe any more in weakness of flesh, but in the wonderfull power of the spirit, the which he declareth in myracles, in the sacrifice of his death, and in the resurrection. In summe, he is so absent from vs in body, that yet wee may beholde him sitting at the right hand of his father. If such a beholding of him bring vs not peace, that we may go ioyfully to death, wee are more then vnthankfull to God, and wee carelesly account of the glory, which he hath bestowed on vs.

31. *Which thou hast prepared.* By these wordes Simeon signifieth that Christe was ordained of God, that all people might enioy his grace, and that
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shortly after hee should be placed vp on high, that hee might turne the eyes of all men vnto him. And in this worde he comprehendeth what Prophecies soeuer there bee of the encrease of the kingdome of Christe. But if Simeon embracing the tender infant in his armes could yet extend his mind to the vtter borders of the world, that hee acknowledged his present power euery where: how much more doth it become vs at this day to thinke more royally of him, sith that he is lift as a banner to the Gentiles, and hath made himselfe knowne to the whole worlde.

32 *A light to lighten.* Now Simeon sheweth to what end Christ was brought forth from the father before all people, that is, that he might lighten the Gentiles, which before were in darknesse, and that he might be the glory of the people Israell, for betweene this and them hee maketh a difference, and that not without a cause, because that the children of Abraham by right of adoption were neare vnto God, but the Gentiles with whom God hadde made no couenant, were accounted as strangers fro the church. By the which reason, Israel, Ier. 31.9. is not onely called the childe of God, but also the first borne, & Paule teacheth to the Ro. 15.8. that Christ came that he might be a minister of circumcision, according to the promises giuen vnto the fathers. But Israel is so preferred to the Gentiles, that all they in common might obtaine saluation in Christ. A light to lighten, signifieth as much as if it had beene sayde, to giue light to the Gentiles, whereby we gather that men are naturally without light, vntill that Christ the sunne of righteousnesse shine vnto them. As concerning Israel, although they were endued with great honour from God, yet Simeon sheweth that all this glory dependeth of this one head, that the redeemer was promised them.

Luke 2.

Matthew. Marke.

33. And Ioseph and his mother marnailed at those thinges, which were spoken touching him.

34. And Simeon blessed them, & said vnto Mary his mother: bebolde, this childe is appointed for the fall and rising againe of many in Israell, & for a signe which shall bee spoken against.

35. Yea, and a sword shall pierce through thy soule, that the thoughtes of many hearts may be opened.

36. And there was a Prophetesse, one Anna the daughter of Phannuel, of the tribe of Aser, which was of a greate age, and had lined with an husband 7. yeares from her virginitie.

37. And shee was widowe foure score and foure yeares, and went not out of the temple, but serued God with fastings and prayers, night and day.

38. She then comming at the same instante vpon them, confessed likewise the Lord, and spake of him to all that looked for redemption in Ierusalem.

39. And when they had performed all thinges according to the law of the Lord, they returned into Galile, to their owne citie Nazareth.

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33. And

33. *And Ioseph & his mother.* Luke doth not say that they were amazed as at a new or a strange matter, but that they reuerently considered, & with due estimation embraced this prophesie of the holy Ghost, out of the mouth of Simeon, that they might more & more profit in the knowledge of Christ. And we are taught by this exaple, after we are once instructed in a right faith, to gather what small helps soeuer may seeme to auail for the conformation of the same : for he hath then rightly profitted in the word of God, who ceaseth not to esteeme whatsoever he daily readeth or heareth, for the continuall furtherance of sayth.

34. *And Simeon blessed them.* If thou referrest this to Ioseph & Mary, there is no difficultie in the matter, but because Luke seemeth to comprhend with the Christ, it may be demanded by what right Simeon tooke vpon him this office of blessing, for the lesse is blessed of the greater, as the Apostle teacheth. Heb. 7. 7. Furthermore, it seemeth to be absurde, that any mortall man should conceiue prayers for the sonn of God, I answer that the Apostle doth not speake of euery blessing, but of the priestes only, for men otherwise do blesse one another. And it is more probable that Simeon as a priuate man, and as one of the common sort of the people blessed them, rather then as a publike person : for as it is saide before, he was neuer called a priest. But there is no absurditie if we say that he prayed for the happie successe of the kingdome of Christe, because the spirit in the Psalme, commaundeth this maner of blessing to all the godly. *Behold this childe is appointed.* Simeon properly directeth this speech to Mary, yet it generally belongeth to all the godly. The holy Virgine had neede of this admonition, least that she triumphing at these pleasant beginnings, as it commonly cometh to passe, shoulde bee the lesse able to beare the sorrowes that were to come. And also, least shee shoulde hope that Christe shoulde bee receiued with the generall fauour of all the people, but rather that shee might bee armed with inuincible strength of the minde against all contrary blastes. But yet the spirit of God woulde deliuer a generall doctrine to all the godly that they beholding the worlde with wicked contumacie resisting Christe, shoulde not bee shaken nor broken with such harde dealing. Wee knowe howe grievous and sore a hinderance the vnbeliefe of the worle is vnto vs, but it behooueth vs to ouercome it, if wee will beleeu in Christe Iesu : for the estate of menne was neuer brought to so good passe, that the greater parte shoulde follow Christe. Wherefore it is necessary that whosoever shoulde giue their names to Christe shoulde bee instructed in these principles, and armed with these defences, that they may continue in his sayth. But this was a most grievous temptation, that Christe was not knowne of his owne. Nay he was contumeliously reiecte from that people, which boasted themselves to be the Church of God. And especially for that the Priestes and the Scribes which hadde the gouernement of the Church, were his most deadly enemies. for who woulde thinke that hee was their king, that should see him so vnworthily & reprochfully reiecte from them? Therefore Simeon doth not without cause foretell that Christ was appointed for the fall of many, and those of the people of Israell. And the meaning is, that hee was ordayned of God, that hee shoulde overthrow and cast many downe headlonge. But it is to bee noted that the fall rose hereof, that the vnbe-
leuers

Ieeuers stumbled at him, the which is shortly after declared, where Simeon calleth him a signe to be spoken against. Therefore because the vnbeleeuers are rebels vnto Christ, they strike themselves against him, whereof followeth their fall. And it is a Metaphore fetched from a marke or butte, at the which archers doe shoote, as if that Simeon should haue sayd: Heereby is the malice of men perceiued, nay the wickednesse of all mans witte, that all men had made a conspiracie, and should stirre and crie out against the sonne of God. For there could not bee such a consent of the worlde to speake against the Gospel, except it were as a naturall discord betweene the Sonne of GOD and those men. And though the enemies of the Gospell disagree amongst themselves, so as their ambition and furie carieth them into diuers factions: and factiously are deuided into diuerse fantasies, as the varietie of their superstitious which seperateth the Idolaters is manifolde, Yet in this they all agree, that they may withstand the Sonne of God. Wherefore it is truly sayde, that it is too euident a token of the wickednes of man, for that euer it withstandeth Christ. And though it be an incredible wonder, that the worlde so riseth against his creator: yet because the Scripture foretolde that it should so be, and reason openly sheweth, that when men were once estranged from God through sinne, they alwayes flee from him, there is no cause why such examples should disturbe vs, but rather that our faith being furnished with such armes, should buckle it selfe forwards to fight with the resisting of the worlde. Furthermore, because that God had then gathered Israell to himselfe out of the whole world, & now that there is no more difference betweene the Iew and the Grecian: It was conuenient that that should now come to passe, which wee read should then bee done.

Esayas had sayd in his time, chap. 8. 14. Behold, the Lord shall bee as a stumbling stone, and as a rocke to fall vpon, to the two houses of Israell: from that time the Iewes neuer almost ceased to strike against God, but their most violent conflict was against Christ. Now, they which call themselves Christians, do imitate the same furie. Nay, they which proudly arrogate to themselves the supremacie of the Church, doe often bend that power they haue, to oppresse Christ. But let vs remember that they shall nothing preuaile, but that at the length they shall be broken and torne in peeces. For vnder the word of *Falling downe*, the spirit doth so pronounce a punishment vpon the vnbeleeuers, that wee might learne to goe farre from them, least companie shoulde wrappe vs in the same destruction. And Christ is not therefore any lesse to be beloued, for that hee rising, many fall downe: for the saueur of the Gospell ceaseth not to bee pleasant and acceptable to God, although it be deadly to the wicked worlde.

If any man demaund how Christ can bee an occasion of falling to the vnbeleeuers which now are destroyed without him: The answer is easie: they perish twice that willfully deprive themselves of that saluation offered them from God.

Therefore the fall signifieth a double punishment which remaineth for all beleeuers, after that wittingly and willingly they haue striven with God.

And rising againe. To the former clause this comfort is opposed, that it might mitigate the matter odious to our sense: for this is sorrowfull to be heard if nothing else were added, but that Christ should bee a stone of offence, which through his hardnesse should breake and rend in peices a great number of men. Therefore the Scripture calleth vs backe to his other office, that the saluation of men hath the foundation in him, as Esayas 8. 13. also speaketh: Sanctifie the Lord of hostes, let him be your feare, and he shall bee vnto you as a Sanctuary, or a defended tower. And Peter speaketh more plainly: to whom yee come as vnto a living stone disallowed of men, but chosen of God and precious: and yee as liuely stones are built, 1. Pet. 2. 4. for so it is contayned in the Scripture: Behold I put in Sion a cheife corner stone, proued, elect, & precious, and hee that beleeueth therein shall not be ashamed, vnto you therefore which beleuee it is precious, but to them which beleuee not, the stone which the builders disallowed, &c. Therefore least this title wherein Christ is called the stone of offence, should make vs afraid of Christ, he presently on the contrary side affirmeth, that hee is also called the corner stone, whereby the faith of all the godly is sustained: nay, hee would put vs in mind: that that is but accidentall, and that this is naturall and proper. Furthermore, it is worthy to be noted, that Christ is not called the stay or proppe of the godly, but the rising, for the estate of men is not such, as it were expedient for the to remaine in the same: therefore it behoueth them first to rise from death, before they can begin to liue.

35. *Through thy soule.* This admonition auayled to the confirming of the minde of the holy virgin, least shee should bee throwne downe with sorrow, when the time for those bitter conflicts were come which shee shoulde passe through. But although her faith was shaken and troubled with diuers temptations, yet the most bitter strife she had, was with the crosse, whereby Christ seemed as one vtterly extinguished. And although she was neuer swallowed vp of sorrow, yet her breast was not so stonie, but that it was greiuously wounded, for the constancie of the Saints doeth much differ from vnseñsiblenes. *That the thoughts of many hearts may be opened.* Some ioyne this sentence with that clause which goeth somewhat before, that Christ was appoynted for the fall. &c. and they include in a parenthesis, that which we last expounded of the sword, but in my iudgemēt it were better to refer it to the whole sentence. And that word *That*, is not here properly a causall, but only noeth a clause following: for whē the light of the Gospell shineth, & then persecutions arise, withall are the affections of the heart opened which before were hid: for such are the cloakes of mans dissimulatiō, that without Christ they are easily hid. But Christ through his light wipeth away all their feined excuses, and layeth their hypocricie naked. Therefore this office of right is attributed vnto him, that he laieth open the secretes of the heart: but where the crosse followeth the doctrine, he searcheth the hearts more to the quicke. For they which in outward professiō do embrace Christ, they abhorre from suffering the crosse, & because they see the Church subiect to diuerse troubles, they easily forsake their standing.

36. *There was a Prophetesse one Anna.* Luke onely maketh mention of two, by whome Christ was receiued, and that for this purpose, that we might learne

learne to preferre that which is of God, before all the world, though it bee but small. The Scribes and the priestes had then great renowne. But seeing that the spirit of God remained vpon Simeon & Anna, wherof the priestes were vtterly dislitute, these two onely deserue more reuerence, then the whole company of them, which are onely lift vp in pride with vaine titles: for this cause is the age of Anna expressed, and she adorned with the title of a Prophetesse. Thirdly, there is noted a notable testimony of her godly holines of life. For these are the things which by right get authority and estimation. And truly the disguised renowne and vaine pompe deceueth none other, but them which for the vanitie of their witte, are addicted to fantastlicall deceites. It is said that shee liued 7. yeeres with her husband from her virginie, that wee might know that she was a widow euen in the flow. r of her age: for being a yong maide she was married, and shortly after she lost her husband. And by this circumstance, that shee abstained from a second mariage, hauing as yet a luttie body, encrease th the praise of her chastitie: yet that which followeth may be expounded two wayes, that she was a widow almost offoure score and foure years: that is, that there was so much time passed in her widowhood, or that she had liued so long. If thou accountest foure score & foure from her widowhood, it must follow that she was aboue a hundred yeare olde, but I leaue this indifferent. And that the spirit of prophesie did as yet shine in some fewe, the doctrine of law and the Iewish religion was as it were by these signes approoued, vntill Christ should come: for that it was necessary in such a vaste waitnesse of religion, that the elect of God, should be stayed with these helpes, least they should fall away.

37. *Shee went not out of the Temple* It is an hyperbolicall kinde of speech, yet the sense of it is plaine, that Anna was almost continually in the Temple. Luke addeth that shee worshipped GOD with fastinges and continuall prayers, wherof wee gather that shee frequented not the temple, as it with this bare going thither shee woulde discharge her dutie, but also that shee vsed other exercises of godlinesse. But it is worthy to bee noted, that one and the same rule is not here prescribed to all: neither ought these things bee drawne into a generall example, which are heere prayseed in this widowe woman, for it behooueth vs wisely to discerne what appertayneth to euery mannes calling: for foolish emulation hath filled the worlde with Apes, while superstitious men doe more greedily then wisely snatch vnto themselves, whatsoeuer they heare prayseed in the saintes, as though that as there are distincte degrees of orders, so there were not also a choyce to bee hadde of woorkes, that euery one might answer to his seuerall calling. That which is heere spoken of Anna, Paule doth especially restraîne to widowes, therefore maryed folkes shall do very preposterously, if they should frame their life after an vnlike example: yet there remaineth adoubt, that Luke seemeth to establish part of the worship of God in fastinges. But it is to bee noted, that of those woorkes which belong to the worshipping of God, some are required simply, and (as they saye) are necessary of themselves, and there are others which are to bee referred to this ende, that they might serue those former. Prayers doe properly appertaine to the worshipping of God: and fasting is an inferiour ayde, which is no otherwise approoued of God, but as it helpe

peth the endeouour and zeale of praying : for the rule is to be holden, that the offices of men are to be esteemed by the right and lawfull end. The distinction also is to be holden, that God is directly worshipped with prayers and not with fastings, but in consideration of that which followeth. And it is not to be doubted but this holy woman vsed her fastinges, to lament for the calamitie of the Church that then was.

39. *Confessed likewise.* Luke comended the holy melodie, which resounded in the tongues of Simeon & Anna, that the faithfull might mutually exhort them selues with one mouth to sing the prayeses of God, & that some should likewise answer others. When hee saith that Anna spake vnto all that looked for the redemption, he againe noteth the small number of the godly: for the chiefe head or foundation of sayth was put in this expectatiō, & it appeareth that there were but fewe which nourished the same in their mindes.

39. *They returned into Galile.* I doe easily graunt that the journey into Egypt was betweene these. And that which Luke sayth that they dwelt in their owne citty Nazareth, was in order of time after the flight into Egypt, which Matthew reporteth. Furthermore, if it be nor absurde to haue that omitted by one Euangelist, which is declared by an other, there is also no let, but that wee may say that Luke cutting off that time, whereof he had appointed to make no mention, passed ouer to the history following: but yet I assent not to their comment which saigne that Ioseph & Mary after they had performed the sacrifice of purgation, returned to Bethlehem, that they might dwell there. For they foolishly imagine that Ioseph had a dwelling place there, where hee was so vnknown, that he could not finde a place to remaine in as a guest. Neyther doeth Luke vnaduisedly call Nazareth as wel his citty as Maryes, wherby we gather that hee neuer dwelt in Bethlechem, although hee sprang or rise from thence. But of the order of times I will presently speake more fully.

Matthew 2.

13. *After their departure, beholde the Angell of the Lorde appeared to Ioseph in a dreame, saying: Arise, and take the babe and his mother, and flee into Egypt, and bee there till I bring thee worde, for Herode will seeke the babe to destroy him.*

14. *So hee arose and tooke the babe and his mother by night, and departed into Egypt.*

15. *And was there vnto the death of Herode, that it might bee fulfilled, which was spoken of the Lorde by the Prophet, saying: out of Egypt haue I called my sonne.*

16. *Then Herode seeing that hee was mocked of the wise men, was exceeding wroth and sent forth and slew all the male children that were in Bethlechem, and in all the coastes thereof, from two yeares olde and vnder, according to the time which he had diligently searched out of the wise men.*

17. *Then was that fulfilled which was spoken by*

Marke.

Luke.

by the Prophet Ieremias, saying.

18. In Rama was a voyce heard, mourning and weeping, and great lamentation, Rachell weeping for her children and would not be comforted, because they were not.

13. After their departure. How many dayes there were betweene the departure of the wise men, and vntill the time that Ioseph was commaunded to flee into Egypt it is vnknown, neyther is it any great matter: but that it is probable that the Lord spared Marie vntill shee were strong out of her childebed, that shee might be able to take her iourney. And this was the wonderful counsell of God, that hee woulde preserue his Sonne by flight: and it is not to be doubted but that the minde of Ioseph was shaken with dangerous temptations when as there was no hope shewed him but onely by flight: for in flight there was no token of the help of God, then it was very vnlikely that he which should be the sauour of all men could not be preserued but by the ayd of a mortal mā. But the Lord held this moderation in preseruing his sonne, that he might shew some signes of his heauenly power, and yet he shewed not the same so euidently, but that it should lie hid vnder a forme of infirmite: for as yet the time was not come that Christ should be openly glorified. It is an euident shewe of the Deitie, in that the Angell foretelleth a matter hid and vnknowne to men: and it appertaineth to the infirmite of the flesh, whereunto Christ was become subiect, in that he commandeth to defend the life of the childe by flight and banishment, but heereby we are taught that God doth not alwayes preserue his children by one meane, but now he sheweth his power gloriously, and now againe he sheweth some little sparkes of the same from vnder obscure couerings or shadowes. Now this wonderfull maner of preseruing the Sonne of GOD vnder the crosse, doth teach that wee doe wickedly, which doe describe a certaine way to God. Therefore let vs suffer our saluation to be furthered of him by diuers meanes, neyther let vs refuse to be humbled, that thereby hee may the better shew forth his glory. But especially wee must not flee the crosse, wherewith he exercised his sonne euen from his first infancie. Furthermore this flight is a part of the foolishnesse of the crosse, but which excelleth all the wisdom of the worlde. That the sauour of Iudea might come forth in his time, he is enforced to flee out of the same, and Egypt nourisheth him, from whence neuer any thing came before, but that which was deadly to the church of God.

Who is not amazed at this so sodaine a worke of God? Againe hereof gather the certaintie of the dreame, in that Ioseph presently obedieth the commandement of the Angell, for his readinesse to obey, doth plainly shew that he doubted not, but that he had God for the authour of his flight which hee was about to take. Yet this may seeme to rise vpon distrust, because that hee hasteth so speedily, for this fleeing also in the night cannot be without feare: but the excuse is easie. He saw that the meanes which God had ordained for their preseruation, was very meane and base, therefore hee gathereth that it is lawfull for him fearefully to flie in the night, as vs is in extreame daungers,

so it behooueth vs alwayes to moderate our feare at the warninges of God, to the which if the Lord consent, it shall not be against our faith. *Bee there till I bring thee worde.* By these wordes the Angell declareth that God hath care of the life of the child, yea euen for the time that is to come, and Ioseph had need of this confirmation, that he might be certainly perswaded that GOD would not onely be a guide to him in this iourney, but also that he would bee a continuall keeper of him in banishment. And by this meanes the Lord woulde stay many cares which might trouble the minde of the godly man, that hee might remaine quiet in Egypt: for otherwise no moment of time should haue passed without diuers torments, when as he should discern and see himselfe deprivied not onely of the inheritance promised of God to all the Saints, but of the temple, the sacrifice, the publike profession of the faith, & should remaine amongst the most wicked enemies of God, and in a deepe whirlpoole of superstitions. He carried with him in the peson of the infant, what good things soeuer the fathers hoped for, or that the Lord had promised them: but because he had not as yet profited so much in the faith and knowledge of Christ, he had neede to be ypholden with this commaundement: *Bee there vntill I bring thee worde,* least that it should be trouble some to him to languish amongst the Egyptians, banished out of his country.

15. *Out of Egypt haue I called my sonne.* Because that Mathew sayth that the prophesie was fulfilled, many haue thought that the Prophet meant nothing but that which is expressed, and they imagined this sense to themselues, that the Iewes doe foolishly, while they resist and endeavour to oppresse the Sonne of God, because the father will call him out of Egypt. And in this maner do they wickedly wrest the wordes of the Prophet, whose purpose is to make the Iewes guiltie of vnthankesfulness, which from their first infancie and beginning haue founde God a louing and a bountifull father, yet they forthwith prouoke him with newe sinnes. Therefore let this be out of controuersie, that this place ought not to be restrayned to Christ: neyther yet is it wrested by Mathewe, but aptly applyed to the present purpose. Thus ought the words of the Prophet be vnderstood, when Israel was but a childe I brought him out of that miserable captiuitie wherein hee was drowned. First hee was like to one dead, and Egypt was to him in stead of a graue, and I brought him from thence, as one brought out of the graue, & did bring him into the light of life. And the Lord sayth so for good cause, for that deliuerance was a certayne birth of the people, for then were the tables of adoption made openly, when as by the lawe proclaimed, hee was receiued into the charge of GOD, a priestly kingdome, and a holy nation, when as hee was seperate from all other people: to be short when as the Lorde erected a tabernacle to himselfe, that he might dwell in the midst of him. So that then the wordes of the Prophet are of this force, as if he should haue sayd, the people were pulled out of Egypt no otherwise, then as out of the deepe swalow of death. Nowe the redemption brought by Christ, what was it else then a resurrection from death, and the beginning of a newe life: for then was the light of saluation almost extinguished, when as God in the peson of Christ, begate againe the Church vnto himselfe. Then in her head came the Church out of Egypt, euen as the

the whole body was brought from thence before. And this Analogie causeth that it seemeth not absurd, that Christ should passe some time of his childhoode in Egypt. But rather so much more glorious was the grace and power of God, and his wonderfull countell did so much more shine forth, because that light came out of darkenesse, and life from out of the hilles: for otherwise the reason of flesh might be amazed, namely that the redeemer should come out of Egypt. Mathew therefore declareth that it is no newe or strange thing, that God should call his sonne from thence. And this rather auayleth for the confirmation of our faith, that as in times past, so now againe the Church of GOD should come out of Egypt. In this was the diuersitie, that in times past the whole people were shut vp in the pryson of Egypt: but in the second redemption, only the head of the Church lay hid there, but caried included in him the saluation and life of all men.

16. Then Herod seeing. Mathew speaketh of the iudgement and opinion of Herod, who thought himselfe deceiued by the wisemen, because they would not be the ministers of his crueltie. He rather, was taken in his owne subtiltie, who vnfaithfully had tained, that he also was minded to worship the newe king. Butther is no mention made of this historie in Iosephus. Only Macrobius in his second booke *Saturnaliorum*, reporting the iestes and merysporting sayings of Augustus, sayth when he heard that at the commandement of Herod, the children in Syria vnder two yere old were slaine, and in that sturre his owne Son was also slaine: I had rather (sayd he) be Herods hogge then his Son. But let the authoritie of one Mathew abundantly satisfie vs. This offence so famous ought not to haue beene omitted of Iosephus. Yet it is no maruell that he saith nothing of the infants, who very lightly and obscurely toucheth as detestable an example of crueltie, that almost at the same time he slew all the iudges, which they called *Sanhedrim*, least there might remaine any remnant at all of the stock of Dauid. And I doubt not, but that by the same feare he was driuen to both these murders. Yet there is a questiō moued of the time: for when Mathew saith that they were slaine which were two yere old & yonger, according to the time hee had searched out of the wise men: whereof it may be gathered that Christ was about that age, or at the least that he was not farre from the poynt of two yere olde. Some drawe this further then so, affirming that Christ was almost at that age at that time that the wisemen came: but I denie that the one of these may be gathered by the other. How fearefull Herod then was, when the rumour was spread among the common people of the newe borne king wee haue seene a little before, and seeing that feare then stayed him that hee durst not sende some priuie traitour to search out the cause, there is no cause why we should maruell that hee was for a time restrained from so odious and so cruell a slaughter: especially sith the late report of the comming of the wisemen was as yet fresh & new. And certainly the coniecture is probable, that he deferred the execution of that villanous offence which he had in his minde, vntill he saw occasion, & it may be that the iudges were first slaine of him, that the people being without their captaines, he might without controulement compell them to beare any thing. Whereby it may be gathered that they vte a triuolous argument, which say that Christ was two yere olde when hee was wor-

shipped of the wise men, because that according to the time wherein the starre appeared, Herod slew the children of two yeare olde and somewhat vnder, & foolishly they take it as granted, that the starre appeared not vntill the Virgin was deliuered. But it is much more likely to bee true, that they were warned before, and that they tooke their iourney about the natiuitie of Christ, that they might finde and see the infant new borne in his swathing bands, or in his mothers lappe. And that about the rest is a childish deuice, that they came out of some vnknowne country, and as it were out of an other worlde, so that they had almost spent 2. yeares in their iournie. Furthermore, those things which Osiander bringeth, are rather to bee laughed at, then neede any confutation. But in this text of the historie which I propose, there is no inconuenience, that the wise men came before the time of her childebed was passed ouer, and they sought a king which was borne, and not one which was nowe two yeare olde, and that Ioseph (they being returned into their country) fled away by night, but yet in passage of his iourney he executed at Ierusalem that duty of religion which by the law of the Lord was prescribed. (And coulde he in so populous a city, wherunto there was a continual concourse of people out of all places, be safe from danger?) that when he was gone into Egypt, Herod carefully considered of his danger, and at the length the boyle of his crueltie brake, which hee had nourished within him aboue a yeare and a halfe: for that aduerbe *Then*, doeth not alwayes signifie a continuance of time in the scripture, but is often vsed where there is a long distance of things.

18. *In Ramā was a voyce.* It is certaine that the Prophet describeth the destruction of the tribe of Benjamin, which came to passe in his time, for hee had foretold the cutting off of the tribe of Iuda, whereunto the halfe tribe of Benjamin was annexed. He ascribeth the mourning to Rachel which was dead, by the figure *prosopopeia*, which auaileth much to the mouing of affections. But Ieremias bringeth not in these Rethoricall colours, only for the setting forth of his oration, but because the hardnes and sluggishnes of the living could not otherwise be corrected, then by calling the dead after a sort out of their graues to lament for the vengeance of God, which they that liue, vse for the most part to haue in derision. And sith that prophesie of the prophet was fulfilled at that time: Matthew doth not vnderstand it, as if it were there foretolde what Herod should do: But that at the coming of Christ that lamentation should be renewed, which the Beniamites had vsed many yeres before, and so he would meete with an offence, which might trouble and shake the mindes of the godly: namely, that no saluation was to be hoped for from him, for whose sake these infants were slaine as soone as he was borne. Nay, this seemed to be an vntowarde and vnhappie prophesie, that the birth of Christ shoulde kinde a greater flame of crueltie, then was wont to burne in most seuerer warres with enemies. And as the prophet promiseth a restoring, were a nation was cut vp euen from the very infantes: so Matthew declareth, that that destruction shall not hinder, but that Christ shall shortly after appeare as a redeemer of all the people: for wee knowe that all that chapter is filled with most sweete consolations. And after that funerall complaine, there presently followeth, reſrayne thy voice from weeping, and thine eyes from teares, for thy worke shall be rewarded, and

and there is hope in thine ende. Therefore this similitude is there of that former destruction executed vpon the tribe of Benjamin with this second, that both of them was a signe of saluation that shoulde be restored.

Matthew. 2.

19. And when Herode was dead: beholde, an Angell of the Lorde appeareth in a dreame to Ioseph in Egypt.

20. Saying, arise, and take the babe and his mother, and goe into the lande of Israell: for they are dead which sought the babes life.

21. Then hee arose vp, and tooke the babe and his mother, and came into the land of Israel.

22. But when he heard that Archelaus did raigne in Iudea, instead of his father Herode, hee was afraid to go thither: yet after hee was warned of God in a dreame, he turned aside into the parts of Galile.

23. And went and dwelt in a cittie called Nazareth, that it might be fulfilled which was spokē by the Prophets, which was, that hee should be called a Nazarite.

Marke.

Luke.

19. When Herod was dead. In these words is the cōstancy of the faith of Ioseph shewed, in that he remained in Egypt, vntil he was againe by the cōmandement of God called backe into his countrey: whereby we see that the Lord neuer forsake ths, but that he helpeth thē in time cōuenient. But it is probable that Ioseph presently after the death of Herod returned out of Egypt, before that Aug. Cēsar by his decree had appointed Archelaus ruler of Iudea: for by his fathers wil he was appointed to succeed in the kingdō, yet he abstained frō the name of a king, being admonished that this depended vpon the wil & appointment of Cēsar yet he gouerned al things, thē he went to Rome & got the same cōfirmed: only the name of a king was denied him, vntil by deeds he should deserue the same. But Philip was gouernour of Galile, a man of a soft wit & almost like a private man. Therefore Ioseph by the aduise of the angel, went into his countrey, because that there was lesse danger vnder a prince not giuē to bloud, whch lowly glorified his subiects. Also the purpose of God is alwayes to be had in memory, in that he kept his son alwayes frō the beginning vnder the exercises of the crosse, because that this was the way whereby he should redeem the church: & for that cause tooke he vpon him our infirmities, & was subiect to dangers, and endangered with feares, that by his diuine power he deliuering the Church from thē, he might giue it euerlasting peace. Wherefore his danger was our safetie, & his feare our assurance, not that he then could bee afraid by reason of his age, but because that through the feare of Ioseph and Mary hee was carried hither and thither, it might be worthily sayde, that our feares were layed vpon him, that he might obtaine a peaceable assurance for vs.

23. That hee shoulde bee called a Nazarite. Matthew doeth not deriue a Nazarite of Nazareth, as if that this were the proper and certaine Etimologie, but it is onely an allusion. But *nazir* significth one holy and

consecrate to God, of *Nazar*, which is to seporate, & the Hebrewes call *Nazar* a flower. But it is not to bee doubted but that Matthew considered the former sence: For we neuer read that the Nazarites were called flourishing: but such as were consecrat to the Lord, according to the prescription of the law, which is in the booke of Numbers, chap. 6. 4. Therefore this is the meaning. Although that Ioseph was driven by feare into a corner of Galile: yet God had a further purpose in his counsell, and thereby was the city of Nazareth ordayned for him to dwell in, that he might worthily beare the name of a Nazarite. But it is demanded by which of the Prophets this name was giuen to Christe, sith in no place there remaineth any such testimony. To some it seemeth sufficient, that the scripture doth oft call him holy, but this is too cold an answer. For Matthew, as wee see, doth stand vpon the word, and hath respect vnto the old Nazarites, who had a peculyer kinde of holinesse: as if he shoulde say, that it was meete that that shoulde bee fulfilled in the person of Christe, that was then shadowed in the Nazarites, who were as the firste frutes chosen vnto GOD, Yet it remaineth to searche where the Prophetes say, that this name was giuen to Christe. Chrysostome because hee cannot vndo the knotte, cutteth it thus: saying, that many of the bookes of the Prophetes are lost. But that answer hath no colour in it: for although the Lorde, that hee might punish the sluggishnesse of the olde people tooke from them some parte of the scripture, or cut away some part that was not so necessary: yet since the comming of Christ nothing was lost. And very vnlearnedly is that place of Iosephus brought for this purpose, where he saith, that there were two bookes left by Ezechiell. For that which Ezechiell prophecieth of a new Temple and of a kingdome, is evidently distinguished from the former prophesies, and maketh as it were, a new volume. If that at this day wee haue all those bookes of Scripture remainyng and safe, which were extant in Matthewes time, it is necessary that this testimony of the Prophet, which he citeth shoulde be found in some place.

But amongst them all, in my iudgement, Bucers opinion is most right, who thinketh that the place out of the booke of Iudges, chap. 13. 5. is here noted. And there is mention made of Sampson, but because that Sampson is not called a redeemer of the people, but as hee was a figure of Christ, and the deliuerance brought by his hand and ministerie, was a certaine token shadowing that full saluation, which at the length shoulde be brought vnto the world by the Son of God. Whatsoener the scripture speaketh of Sampson in good parte, is rightly referred to Christ. If any desire to haue it plainer, Christe was the principall example, but Sampson was an inferiour shadowe or figure of him: therefore when hee was clothed with the person of the redeemer, weemust know that none of those prayes wherewith that excellent and diuine office was adorned, doth so properly belong to him as to Christe: for the Fathers tasted that grace of redemption, which through Christe is giuen vs to comprehend at the full. That Matthew placeth this worde Prophets in the plurall number, the answer is easie, because that booke of the Iudges was composed by diuers Prophetes. Yet I thinke, that that whiche is here sette downe of the Prophetes doth reache farther: For Ioseph (who was a temporall preseruer of the Church, and many wayes bare

bare a figure of Christ, or was rather a liuely image of him) was called the Nazarite of his brethren, Gen. 49. 26. and Deut. 32. 16. Therefore God would that the excellent dignitie, whereof he had made a shewe in Ioseph, shoulde shine in Sampson, and he gaue him the name of a Nazarite, that the faithfull being instructed with these small beginnings, might more diligently looke for their redeemer which was to come, who was to be seperate from all, that hee might be the first borne amongst many brethren.

Luke. 2.

Matthew Marke.

40. And the child grew, and waxed strong in spirit and was filled with wisdom, and the grace of GOD was with him.

41. Now his parents went to Ierusalem euery yeare at the feast of the passeouer.

42. And when hee was 12. yeare olde, & they were come vp to Ierusalem after the custome of the feast,

43. And had finished the dayes thereof, as they returned, the childe Iesus remained in Ierusalem, and Ioseph knew not, nor his mother.

44. But they supposing, that hee had bene in the companie, went a dayes iourney, and sought him among their kinsfolke and acquaintance.

45. And when they found him not, they turned back to Ierusalem, and sought him,

46. And it came to passe three daies after, that they found him in the Temple, sitting in the midst of the Doctours, both hearing them, & asking them questions.

47. And all that heard him, were astonished at his vnderstanding and answers.

40. And the childe grewe. Mathew goeth presently from the infancie of Christ to his manifestation. Luke heree reporteth one thing at the least worthy to be remembred: that is, that Christ in the midst of his youth gaue a shewe of his office to come, or at the least by this one exercise in his childehoode, hee would shew what he should be hereafter. And first he sayth that he grew and waxed strong in the spirit: by which wordes he declareth that the giftes of his minde did increafe also together with his age. Whereby we gather that these profitings or increasings are referred to his humane nature, for nothing can be added more to his Godhead. Yet it is demaunded whether hee did not excell in all fulnesse of spirituall giftes, presently after that he was conceived in the wombe of his mother, for it seemeth to be absurde that any thing should bee wanting to perfection in the sonne of God. Yet the answer is easie, if it derogateth nothing from his glory, that he was altogether humbled and layd lowe: then there can be no inconuenience to him in this, that as his will was to grow in body, so also to profire in minde for our sake. And certainly, when the Apostle teacheth the Heb. 4. 15. that hee was like vnto vs in all thinges ex-

cepting sin, without doubt he also comprehendeth this, that his soule was subiect to ignorance. This is the onely difference betweene vs & him, that those infirmities which of necessitie are tied to vs, he tooke vpon him freely & of his owne will. Therefore Christ for the reason and estate of his age according to his humane nature, encreased in the free giftes of the spirit, that out of his fullnesse he might impart to vs, because we receiue grace out of his grace. Some which are too fearefull, reſtraine that which is ſayd heere to an outward ſheeu and expound it, that Christ ſeemed to profite as though indeede hee increaſed, not in any new vnderſtanding. But the words ſound otherwiſe, and this error is yet more plainly confuted; when as ſhortly after Luke addeth. *The childe profiſed in age and wiſedome with God and men.* For it is not lawfull to imagine that ther lay hid in Christ any vnderſtanding, which in ſucceſſe of time appeared vnto God. And it is not to be doubted but that the counſell of God was plainly to expreſſe how truly and perfectly Christ embraced all partes of a brotherly vniſing with men, when he tooke vpon him our fleſhe. Neither doe wee by this means imagine him to be two: for although there was one perſon of God and man, yet it ſolloweth not that whatſoeuer was proper to the Deitie, ſhould bee attributed to the humane nature: But for as much as it was neceſſary for our ſaluation, the ſoane of God kept his diuine power hid. And that which Ireneus ſayth, his Deitie reſting, he ſuffered his paſſion, I do not onely interpret it of his corporall death: but alſo of that incredible ſorrow & vexation of the ſoule, who vttered this complaint vnto him: my God why haſt thou forſaken mee? In ſumme, except a man ſhould denie Christ to be made very man, let him not be aſhamed alſo to confeſſe that hee willingly tooke vpon him all thoſe thinges which cannot be ſeperate from our humane nature. And it is fooliſhly objected that ignorance could not light vppon Christ, becauſe it was the puniſhment of ſinne, for the ſame may be ſaid alſo of death: but rather the ſcripture affirmeth that he fulfilled the office of a mediator, becauſe that what puniſhmets ſoeuer we had deſerued, he tooke from vs and laid vpon himſelfe. Furthermore they do very groſely and ignorantly, in that they make ignorance a puniſhment of ſin: for it cannot be thought, that Adam when he was yet ſound, knew all thinges. Neither do the Angels beare the puniſhment of ſin, when they are ignorant of any thing: Some conclude more ſubtily, that there was no ignorance in Christ, becauſe that ignorance is a fault. But theſe alſo doe take very euill a falſe and a vaine principle: for otherwiſe it were neceſſary for the Angels to be like to god that they might be without fault. Blindneſſe or ignorance of a mans minde is a fault, and is worthily accounted as a part of originall ſinne: but here is no other ignorance attributed to Christ, then ſuch as may be in a man pure from all ſpot of ſinne. But when Luke ſayth that he waxed ſtrong in ſpirit, & was filled with wiſedome, he meaneth whatſoeuer wiſedome is in men, and dayly groweth in them, that it floweth out of this onely fountaine, that is from the ſpirit of God. That ſpeech which ſolloweth (*the grace of God was with him*) is more generall, for it comprehendeth what excellencie ſoeuer was in him.

41. Now his parents went euery yeare. Heere is the godlineſſe of Mary and Ioseph prayed, becauſe that they diligently exerciſed themſelues in the outward worſhippe of God. And they tooke not this yeerely iour-

they vpon them rashly, but by the commandement of God : for in that the law only comāndeth the males, that they should present themselues in the sight of God, it doth not wholly exclude women, but by permission spareth them. And by this note is pure religion discerned from vaine & wicked superstitions, for that she keepeth her selfe in obedience to God, and the commandement of his law: but the other wander after their own fantasie beside the word of God, without any certaine rule. And although the worship of the Temple was infected with many corruptions, & the priesthood saleable, and the doctrine filled with many errors: yet because that the ceremonies of the lawe did as yet flourish there, & they keepe the outward rite of sacrificing, as was appointed in the law, it behooued the faithfull to testifie their sayth by such exercises. But the name of father is after the common opinion of men, improperly giue vnto Ioseph.

44. *That hee had bene in the company.* It appeareth by diuers places of the Scripture, that they which came on the feast dayes to the Temple to worship, did vse to make their journey in great companies. Wherefore it is no maruaile if that Ioseph and Mary were not so carefull for the childe the first day. But after they shewe that they were not carelesse, neyther throughe sloth nor negligence.

46. *Sitting in the midst of the Doctours.* There must needs shine some beames of Gods glory openly in the childe, that he was allowed to sitte by those proud men. And although it bee probable that hee sat in some lower seate, rather then in the place of the Doctours: yet these proude disdainfull men would neuer haue giuen him the hearing in the publike assembly, excepte that some diuine power had compelled them, therefore this was but a signe of his calling, whose full time was not yet come. And therefore hee gaue them this onely taste, which presently men hadde forgotten, but that Mary kept it layde vppe in her heart, that afterwardes she might bring the same from thence with other treasures for the common vse of the godly. And these two things are to be noted, that all men maruailed, because that they accounted it as a wonder, that a childe should frame his questions so aptly and sely. Againe in hearing & demanding, Christe himselfe rather played the parte of a scholler then of a maister. Because that as yet he was not called of his Father, that hee might professe himselfe a publike Doctour of the Church, he doth onely moue questions modestly to the Doctours. Yet it is not to be doubted, but that by this exercise hee nowe beganne to reprove their corrupt maner of teaching: for that which Luke addeth after of answers, I interpret to bee vsed after the Hebrew maner, for any vword or speech.

Luke 2.

Matthew. Marke.

48. *So when they saw him, they were amazed, and his mother sayd vnto him. Some why haste thou thus deals with vs? Beholde, thy father and I haue sought thee with heavy hearts.*

49. *Then sayde hee vnto them: Howe is it that ye sought me? knew ye not that I must go about my fathers businesse.*

50. But they vnderstoode not the woordes that hee spake vnto them.

51. Then he went downe with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subiect to them, and his mother kept all these sayings in her heart.

52. And Iesus increased in wisdome and stature and in fauour with God and men.

48. His mother sayd. In my iudgement they are deceiued which thinke that the holy virgine sayd so as boasting of her authoritie. But it may bee that thee hauing him aside, and no witnesse being by, she began at the length to expostulate with her sonne, after that he was come from the assembly. Howsoever the matter was, thee was not caried away with ambition, but because of her three dayes sorrowe, she vttered this complaint vnto him: yet that the expostulateth as if she was vniustly iniured, doth plainly declare howe ready wee are by nature, hauing no regard of God, to defend our owne right. This holy virgine had rather haue died a hundred times then off set purpose of minde thee woulde prefer her selfe before God: but while thee cockereth her motherly sorrowe, through inconsideration she slideth into that fault. And truly by this example we are admonished to suspect all the affections of the flesh, and howe needfull it is for vs to take heed, least that we hold our right further then is conuenient, & being addict to our selues, we should defraud God of his honour.

49. Knew ye not. Christ reprehendeth his mother worthily, yet he doth the same sparingly & gently. The summe is, that the durie which he oweth to God his father, is farre to be preferred before all obedience to men. Therefore those earthly parentes doe ill, which sorrowe that they are neglected in respecte of God. And hereof is a generall doctrine to be gathered. What soeuer is due vnto men, ought to be subiect to the first table of the law, that the power of God may remaine vntouched. So obedience is to be giuen to kings, to Parents and to maisters: but no otherwise then vnder the power of God: that is, that nothing be taken or pulled from God for mans cause: neyther is our obedience then broken towards menne, when as there is an especiall regarde hadde of God. *About my Fathers businesse.* By this woorde hee declareth that hee hath somewhat greater then manne. Hee also declareth the principall ende why hee was sent into the worlde: namely, that hee might fulfill the office enioyned him of his heauenly father. But it is maruell that Ioseph and Mary vnderstoode not this answer who hadde beene taught by many testimonies that Iesus was the sonne of God, I answer: Though they were not altogether ignorant of the heauenly stocke of Christe, yet they vnderstoode not in euery poynte that hee was occupied in fulfilling the commandementes of the Father, because that as yet his calling was not evidently made knowne vnto them. But in that Mary keepeth in her heart those thinges, which as yet shee conceiuerh not in the vnderstanding of her minde, lette vs learne reuerently to take, and (as seede conceiued in the earth is nourished) to lay vppon our mindes those mysteries of God, which as yet excell the capacitie of our minde.

51. He was subiect to them. This humbles in that the Lord & head of Angels.

Angelles willingly made him selfe ſubiect to mortall creatures, did Chriſt take vpon him for our ſaluatiō. For ſo had the counſell of God determined, that for a time he ſhould be hidde vnder the name of Ioseph, as vnder a ſhadow. And though no neceſſitie enforced Chriſt to this ſubiection, but that he might haue exempted him ſelfe from the ſame: yet becauſe that vpon this condition hee had taken the nature of man vpon him, that he might be ſubiect to his parentes, & withal, hee tooke vpon him the perſon of a man and of a ſeruant, as concerning the office of a redeemer, this was his lawfull condition, ſo that it becometh euery one of vs more willingly to beare that yoke, that ſhall belayd vpon vs of the Lord.

Matthew. 3.

Marke. 1.

Luke. 3.

1. And in thoſe dayes, Iohn the Baptiſt came and preached in the wildernes of Iudea.

2. And ſaid, repent, for the kingdom of heauen is at hand.

3. For this is he of who it is ſpoken by the Prophet Eſaias, ſaying, the voyce of him that cryeth in the wildernes, is, prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his pathes ſtreight.

4. And this Iohn had his garment of camels haire, and a girdle of a ſkin about his loynes: his meat was alſo locuſtes and wild honney.

5. Then went out to him Ieruſalem and all Iudea, & all the region round about Iordan.

6. And they were baptiſed of him in Iordan, confeſſing their ſinnes.

1. The beginning of the Goſpel of Ieſus Chriſte, the ſonne of God.

2. As it is written in the Prophets: Behold, I ſend my meſſenger before thy face which ſhall prepare thy way before thee.

3. The voyce of him that cryeth in the wildernes is, prepare ye the way of the Lorde, and make his pathes ſtreight.

4. Iohn did baptiſe in the wildernes, & preach the baptiſme of amendment of life, for remiſſion of ſinnes.

5. And all the countrey of Iudea, & they of Ieruſalem went out vnto him, and were all baptiſed of him in the riuer of Iordan, confeſſing their ſinnes.

6. Now Iohn was clothed with camels haire, and with a girdle of a ſkin about his loynes, & he did eat locuſts and wild honney.

1. Now in the fifteenth ye are of the raigne of Tiberius Ceſar, Pontius Pilate being gouernour of Iudea & Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Iturea, & of the countrey of Trachonitis, & Lyſanias the tetrarch of Abylene.

2. When Annas & Caiaphas were the high prieſtes, the worde of God came vnto Iohn, the ſon of Zacharias in the wildernes.

3. And hee came vnto all the coſts of Iordan, preaching the baptiſme of repentance, for the remiſſion of ſinnes.

4. As it is written in the booke of the ſayings of Eſaias: the prophet, which ſayth, the voyce of him that cryeth in the wildernes is, prepare ye the way of the Lorde, make his pathes ſtreight.

5. Euery vally ſhall be filled, & euery mountaine and hill ſhall be brought lowe, and crooked things ſhall be made ſtreight, and the rough waies ſhall be made ſmooth.

6. And all fleſh ſhall ſee the ſaluation of God.

Although that is parte of the Goſpell which wee haue ſet downe before out of Matthewe and Luke, yet it is not without a cauſe that Marke

accounteth the beginning of the Gospell at the preaching of Iohn Baptist. For as it is recorded in the first of Iohn, that then the law and the prophetes were ended. The law and the Prophets to Iohn, and since the kingdome of GOD, Luke. 16. 16. And to this very aptly agreeth the testimony of Malachy, which hee alleageth. The Lorde that he might the more incense the mindes of men to the desire of the promised saluation, had ordayned for a time, that the people should bee without new Prophecies, and we know that Malachy was the last of the lawfull and certaine Prophets. Also least the hungry Iewes shoulde in the meane while faynt, hee exhorteth them that they should keepe themselves vnder the law of Moses, vntill the promised redemption should appeare. And hee maketh mention of the law onely, because that the doctrine of the Prophets doth differ nothing from the same: but it was only an Appendix & more full exposition, that the whole manner of gouerning the Church might depend vpon the law. And it is no new or vnaccustomed matter in the scripture, to comprehend the Prophecies vnder the name of the law: because that all of the were referred to them, as to their fountaine and principall poynt. And the Gospell was not an inferiour addition to the lawe, but a newe manner of teaching, which abrogareth that first. Malachy also discerning a double estate of the Church, appoynteth the one vnder the law, and beginneth the other vnder the Gospell. For it is not to be doubted but that he meaneth Iohn Baptist, when he sayth: Behold, I will send my messenger. because (as it is nowe sayd) here is an expresse distinction made betweene the law, and the newe order & estate of the Church, which was to bee in the same roome. In the same sence he hadde sayde a little before (that which is cited by Marke: for the places are very like) Behold I send Elyas the Prophet to you, before that great day of the Lorde shall come. Also, behold I send my messenger, who shall make cleane the way before me, then shall the Gouvernour, whom ye seeke, come to his temple. Because that he promiseth in both these places a better estat of the church, the was vnder the Gospell, without doubt the beginning of the Gospell is thereby noted. And before the Lorde should come foorth to restore the Church, it is sayde that a forwarner and cryer shoulde come before him, who shoulde declare that hee was at hande: whereby wee gather the abrogation of the lawe and the beginning of the Gospell, properly to be set in the preaching of Iohn. But sith Iohn declareth that Christe was clothed with flesh, both his natiuitie, and the whole history of his appearance is contayned vnder the Gospell.

But here Marke declareth when the Gospell began to be published, wherefore he doth not without cause begin at Iohn, who was the first minister of the same. And for this cause was it the will of the heavenly father to bury, as it were in silence, the life of his sonne, vntill the time of his full reuelation should come. Neyther was it done without the determinate prouidence of God, that the Euangelists should passe by that whole time, that Christ lyued priuately at home: and should by and by passe from his first infancy to the thyrtye yeere of his age, wherein hee endued with the estate of a publike person, is openly shewed as redeemer to the worlde: but that Luke briefly toucheth aboute
the

the twelſe yeare one ſigne and token what his calling ſhould be. And this eſpecially appertaineth for this cauſe : firſt , to knowe that Chriſt was very man, and then the ſonne of Abraham and of Dauid, which the Lord would teſtifie vnto vs.

The reſt which we haue ſet downe of the ſheperdes, the wiſmen, and Si-
meon, doe appertaine to the prouing of his Deitie . And that which Luke de-
clareth of Iohn and his father Zacharias, was as a preface to the Goſpell. Ther
is no abſurditie in changing the perſon in the words of Malachy. Thus GOD
ſpeaketh by the prophet : I ſend my meſſenger, and he ſhall prepare the way
before me . But by Marke the father is brought in ſpeaking to the ſonne . But
we ſee that Marke had no other purpoſe, then that he might more fully declare
the minde of the Prophet.

Marke giueth Chriſt the title of the ſonne of God, whom the other Euan-
gelists witneſſed to be borne of the ſeede of Abraham and of Dauid , that hee
might alſo be the ſonne of man. But Marke thereby declareth that no redempti-
on can be hoped for, but from the ſonne of God.

Mat. 3. 1. *In thoſe dayes.* Luke. 3. 1. *In the fifteenth yeere.* It cannot be gathe-
red out of Matthew and Marke what age Iohn was of, when hee began to come
abroad, But L V K E declareth euidently that he was then thirtie yere olde
or there about. The olde writers of the Church declare almoſt with one con-
ſent, that he was borne fifteene yeare before the death of Auguſtus. His ſucceſ-
ſour Tyberius had now inioyed the Empire fifteene yeares when the ſame Iohn
began to preach : therefore that time of thirtie yeares which I ſpake is gathered:
whereby it alſo followeth, that he did not long execute the office of a teacher,
but that in ſhort time he gaue place vnto Chriſt : for Chriſt as a little after wee
ſhall ſee was alſo baptized when he was thirtie yeare olde, and then he was en-
tered to the performace of his office. But when Chriſt the ſunne of righteouſnes,
preſently followed Iohn his morning ſtarre, or rather the morning, it is no mar-
uaille if that Iohn vaniſhed away, that Chriſtes onely glory might be the more
maniſeſt. L V. *Pontius Pilate.* It is probable that this was the ſecond yeare of
Pilate. For after that Tiberius had obtained the Empire, Iosephus declareth in
the eighteenth booke of Antiquities, that he created Valerius Gratus gouer-
nour of Iudea, placing him in the roome of Annius Rufus . And this putting
one in an others roome, might fall out in the ſecond yeare of his gouernment.
The ſame Iosephus declareth that Valerius was gouernour of Iudea for the
ſpace of eleuen yeares, therefore Pilate hadde holden that prouince about two
yeare, when Iohn began to preach the Goſpell. This Herod whom Luke ma-
keth Tetrarche of Galile, was the ſecond heire of Herod the great, who ſuc-
ceeded his father by will: for the gouernment of Iudea was giuen to Archelaus
but when he was baniſhed by Auguſtus into Vienna, that portion fell into the
handes of the Romans for a pray.

So Luke heere rehearſeth two of Herodes ſonnes : namely, Herode Anti-
pas, who was made Tetrarch of Galile, and had in poſſeſſion, Samaria and
Peraea, and Philip who was Tetrarch of Trachonitis and Iturea, raigned from
the ſea of Tiberias or Genesara, to the foote of Libanus, fro whence the flood
Jordan ariſeth.

They

They vntreuly imagine that Lysanias was the sonne of Ptolomeus Menneus, who was king of Chalcis, who had beene slaine before by Cleopatra, about thirtie yeeres before the birth of Christ, as Iosephus declareth in his fifteenth booke of antiquities. Also hee could scarcely haue beene his nephew, whom the same Iosephus in the first booke of the warre of the Iewes reporteth to haue beene the kindler of the Parthian warre: for then hee should haue beene about threescore yeere old. Furthermore, seeing that he stirred the Parthians to warre vnder Antigonius, he was of necessity then grown to the state of a man. But Ptolomeus Mennæus died not long after the slaughter of Iulius Cæsar, being entred into the office of the Triumuir betweene Lepidus, Antonius, and Octavius: as Iosephus witnesseth in the 14. booke. chap. 23. But this nephew of Ptolomeus, was called Lysanias, as his father was, and hee might also leaue a sonne of his own name. Yet their errour is without question to be reiected, which imagine that Lysanias, who was slaine by Cleopatra should liue threescore yeere after his death.

The name of Tetrarch is heere vsed improperly, as though the whole region should be deuided into foure partes. But seeing that in the beginning the countries were deuided into foure partes, and then that other changes followed: yet for honors sake the name was still continued: in the which sense Pliny numbreth seuateene Tetrarches of one region.

2. *Were the high priestes.* It is certaine that two high Priestes together at one time neuer occupied the priestthoode. Iosephus witnesseth that Caiphas was made high priest by Valerius Gratus, a little before hee went out of the prouince. Wee reade nothing in Iosephus, that should be altered by Pilate, in that time that he gouerned Iudea: but when he was restrained of his authoritie, and was commaunded to goe to Rome to answer his cause, then at that time Vitellius, the gouernour of Syria dryuing Caiphas out, transposed the priestthoode to Ionathas, the sonne of Anani, Antiq. 18. But that Luke nameth two high priests must not so be taken, as if the title were giuen to them both but because that the one halfe of the honour of the priestthoode was in Annas, the high priestes father in law. Wherefore Luke declareth that matters were then so troubled and confounded, that there was then no one true and certaine high priett, but that through ambition and tyrannicall power, that sacred office was torne in sunder.

The word of God came. Before that Luke reporteth, as others doe, that Iohn entred the office of teaching, he sayth, that he was called thereunto of GOD, that his ministerie might beare authoritie with it. I see not why the interpreters had rather to translate it vpon Iohn, rather then *To Iohn*: yet because the sense is not doubtfull, namely, that this ambassage was layd vp with him, and that the commandement of preaching was giuen vnto him, I follow the receiued translation. Hereby gather that there are no true teachers, but to whom that office is enioyned of God. Neyther doth it suffice to haue the word of GOD, except there be also an especiall calling.

That Matthewe and Marke make not mention but of a desert, reconcile it with the wordes of Luke thus, Iohn beganne his office of teaching amongst his neighbours with whome hee dwelt, then hee spread his Gospel

Gospell farther, that it might bee knowne in moe places: whereby it came to passe, that in shorthe time his fame spread vnto Ierusalem. Yet that coast of Iordan might bee called *desertum*, a desert: for it doth not signifie a place not in habited, but a sharpe and hilly ccountrey, which is occupied with a lesse resort of men.

2. *Math: Repent.* Matthew differeth from the other two Euangelistes in this, that in the person of Iohn he setteth downe the summe of his doctrine, and they set it downe in his owne words. Yet Marke hath more by one word then Luke: for he sayth, he came, baptising and preaching the baptisme of repentance, but in the matter it selfe the consent is very good: because that all ioyne repentance with forgiveness of sinnes. For the kingdome of God amongst men is nothing els then a restoring to a happy life, and to a true and eternall felicity. There fore when Iohn sayth, that the kingdome of God is at hand, hee meaneth that men, which were estranged from the righteousness of God, and banished the kingdome of heauen, are againe gathered vnto God, that they might liue vnder his hand. And this doth free adoption & forgiveness of sinnes worke, where by he reconcileth the vnworthy to himselfe. In summe, the kingdome of heauen is nothing else then newnesse of life, wherein God restoreth vs into the hope of eternall immortalitie. For we being taken out of the bondage of sinne and death, he chalengeth vs vnto himselfe, that wee wandring here vpon earth, might now be by sayth possesse that heavenly life to the Ephesians. 1. 4. For although we be like to dead men, yet we know that our life is in safety, while that it is hidde in Christ Colossi. 3. From hence, as out of a fountaine is the exhortation to repentance gathered. And Iohn sayeth not repent, and then by this meanes the kingdome of heauen shall appeare: but in the first place he proposeth the grace of God, and then hee exhorteth menne that they shoulde repent. Whereby it is euident, that the mercy of God, wherby he restoreth those that are lost to be the foundation of repentance. Neither doe Matthew and Luke in any other sense report that he preached repentance for the remission of sinnes: for repentance, (as some vnwisely imagine) is not placed first, as if it should be the cause of forgiveness of sins, or that it might preuent God, that he might beginne to be mercifull vnto vs: but men are commaunded to repent, that they might receiue the reconciliation offered them. But as the free loue of God, where by hee embraceth miserable men, not imputing their sinnes vnto them, orderly goeth before, so it is to be noted, that we haue forgiveness of sins in Christ: not that God woulde nourish them through his loue: but that hee might heale vs from them. Neyther can any man taste the grace of God, except he hate sinne, and be displeased with offences: but by the definition of repentance and sayth it may be fullyer knowne, how vnseparably they are ioyned together: therefore in entreating of this doctrine I am the sparer.

But for the better vnderstanding of this present place, it is meete to obserue that the whole Gospell consisteth of two partes: forgiveness of sinnes, and repentance. And in that Matthewe noteth the first parte by the kingdome of heauen, it may thereby beegathered, that there was hostile dissention betweene menne and God, and that they were wholly banished out of the kingdome of heauen, vntill that God shoulde againe

receiue.

receiue them into his fauour. And though Iohn proposing the grace of God, exhorteth men to repentance, yet it is to be noted, that this also is the gift of God, as well as the inheritance of the kingdome of heauen. For as hee freely forgiveth vs our sinnes, and by his mercy deliuereth vs from the guiltinesse of eternall death, so also hee repayreth vs after his owne image, that we might lue to righteousness. As hee freely adopteth vs to bee his sonnes, so he regenerateth vs by his spirite, that our life might testifie, that wee do not falsly call him father. And Christ doth no lesse quicken vs vnto righteousness, by crucifying our olde man, and by extinguishing the faults of our flesh, then he doth wash away our sinnes by his blood, and appease his heavenly Father towards vs, with the sacrifice of his owne death. Yet this is the summe of the Gospell, that God embraceth vs in his Sonne, our sinnes being washed away: that we denying our selues, and our owne nature, might lue holily & godlily, and so shoulde meditate a heavenly life vpon the earth.

3. *L. V. Preaching the baptisme of repentance.* This maner of speaking dooth first generally shewe, what is the right vse of the sacramentes: Then for what purpose Baptisme was instituted, and what it doth containe.

A Sacrament therefore is not a dumbe ceremonie, which sheweth I worde not what pompe, without doctrine, but hath the worde of GOD annexed to it, which giueth life to the outwarde ceremonie. I meane not that worde, which some Exorcist muttereth with magycall whisperings: but that which pronounced with cleare and open voyce doth auayle to the edifying of faith. For it is not simply sayde that Iohn baptised to repentance, as if the grace of GOD hadde beene included in the visible signe: but that hee preached what the profite of Baptisme was, that the signe might be made effectual by the worde preached. And this is peculiyar to baptisme, that it is called the seale of repentance for forgiveness of sinne.

Nowe seeing that his baptisme hadde the same signification, power and manner, which ours haue: If a figure bee esteemed by the truth thereof, it is false, that the baptisme of Iohn and Christe are diuerse.

MATH. 3. *The voyce of a cryer in the wilderness.* Although that place of Isaias 40. 1. ought not to be restrayned onely to Iohn: yet he is one of them, of whom that is there spoken: for after the Prophet hath spoken of the ouerthrow of the Citie, and the extreame calamitie of the people, hee promisseth a new restitution of the people. The words were, the Lord shall say againe, comfort ye, comfort ye my people. For after the temple was ouerthrowne, and the Sacrifices abolished, the people were ledde into captiuitie, and then estate was almoste desperate: and because their eares were deaffe at the continuall calling of the Prophetes, the Lord did as it were holde his peace for a time. Least the godly mindes should fall downe in that sorrowfull silence the Prophet declareth that there shoulde agayne arise newe Preachers of grace, which shoulde comforte the people in the hope of saluation. Such were Za-

charyah, Haggai, Malachy, Esdras, and such like . But because that there is promised a restitution , which should be perpetuall, and not for a short time: and Esayas especially respecteth the redemption which was hoped for : by the comming of Christ, Iohn was rightly accounted the cheife amongst the ministers of comfort. Then it followeth in the text of the Prophet: The voyce of a cryer, and that voyce is opposed to the silence for a time, whereof I spake euen now: for the Iewes were for a time depriued of that doctrine, which they had vngodly contemned.

The name of a desert is metaphorically put for a desolatiō or a deformed ruine of the people, as was in the time of the banishment. For there was so horrible a dissipation, that it might be compared to a deserte: so the prophet amplifieth the grace of God, as if hee should haue sayd, although the people was throwne farre from their countrie, and was banished out of the companie of men, yet the voyce of God shall also resound in the deserte, which shall ioyfully comfort the that are halfe dead. In this sense Ierusalem was the desert, when Iohn began first to preach: for in euery place all things were brought into a wast and horrible confusion. But it behooued those grosse and foolish men the more to bee stirred vppe by beholding this visible deserte, that thereby they might the more greedily haue receiued the promise of saluation offered vnto them in death.

Nowe wee see how truly this prophesie agreeth vnto Iohn, and how properly it is applyed vnto him. *Prepare ye the way of the Lord.* It is not to be doubted, but that the Prophet speaketh to Cyrus, and the Persians whose aide God vsed: and the meaning is, that the Lorde would by a wonderfull power bring to passe, that a way shoulde bee opened to his people by wayes vntrauailed, by steepe rockes, and by the drie deserte, because that hee had at hande ministers of his grace, which shoulde take all lettes and hinderances out of the way. But that was a beginning, shadowing the redemption.

And when the spirituall truth commeth into the light, Iohn is sent, that he might remoue those lets. And dayly the same voyce soundeth in our eares, that wee shoulde prepare a way to the Lorde: that is: that vices being taken away, which shut vp the kingdome of Christ, wee shoulde giue access to his grace. To the same purpose also belongeth that which followeth in the Prophet: The crooked shall bee made straight: for hee meaneth that there are onely rough and troublesome courses in the worlde: But that through so hard passages the Lorde will make himselfe a waye, that by a Woonderfull meanes hee might pearse through to the accomplishing of our saluation.

6. *All flesh shall see.* The meaning is, that this saluation shall not bee kept secret, or tasted onely by a few men: but that it shall bee knowne and common to all. Whereof it followeth, that this prophesie was not fulfilled in the returne of the people. For although GOD then shewed a token of his fauour: worthy to be re remembered, yet he did not then reueale his saluation to all the world.

Nay,

Nay it is the purpose of the Prophet to oppose the woonderfull excellencie of saluation, which was to bee reuealed, against the former benefites of God, that the faithfull might know that hee neuer dealt so notably with the Church, and that the power of God was neuer so excellently shewed in the deliuerance of his. Flesh in this place doeth signifie men, without the note of sinne.

4. *Math. Iohn had his garment.* The Euangelist doeth not account this amongst his especiall vertues, that hee was addit to a rude and austere manner of liuing, he also fled a meane and an accustomed cleannesse: But because hee had sayde before that hee was a man dwelling among the mountaines.

Now he addeth that his meate and his apparell was according to his dwelling place: And this hee rehearseth not onely, that wee might know that he tooke no delicates, being content with countrie meate and apparell: But that in his filthy and contemptible habite he was much esteemed amongst men very delicate and renowned. Furthermore, as superstition appoynted almost a perfect righteousnesse in these outward shewes, they commonly thought that such decencie was a heape of holinesse: There was an other fault neare vnto this, that they would imagine that this man in this solitarie life, abhorred the cōmon manner of liuing, as Eremites and Monkes excell in this one thing, if they could differ from the rest. At the length there grew ouer grosse ignorance, that they made of his garment of hayres, a whole skinnie. And it is not to be doubted but that the Euangelist describeth heere a mountaine man, farre from all vrbanie finenesse, and daintinesse, not onely content with meate that might be gotten, but onely eating naturall meates: as wild honie, whereof there was good plentie enough in that place, and Locustes, whereof the country was also very fruitfull. Or, because it was profitable, that a man contemned, and not fauoured for any excellencie, should come forth into the worlde, that the onely maiestie of God might shine in him, which yet should draw all men to wonder at him. For that is to be noted, which is added, that great concourse of people came vnto him from euery place: whereby wee gather howe renowned his fame was. Or because it was the purpose of God to propose in him a rare example of frugality, that by this meanes he might allure the Iewes to reuerence his doctrine, or at the least, that hee might conuince the Iewes of vnthankfulnessse, according to that saying of Christ, Iohn came neyther eating nor drinking, &c. Luke 7. 33.

6. *Mat. 3. Mar. They were baptised, confessing their sinnes.* This confession was a testimonie of their repentance. For as the Lord in his sacramentes doeth binde himselfe vnto vs, as it were by giuing vs his hande writing: so it is also meete that we should answer him againe. In baptism he witnesseeth that our sinnes are forgien vs, and he calleth vs to repentance. Therefore that men may rightly offer themselues vnto baptism, they are required to confesse their sins: otherwite the whole action should be nothing els but a vaine sporte. It is also to be noted, that he heere speaketh of them that are growne to some age: who we know are not to be admitted without consideration into the Church, nor by baptism to be receiued into the body of Christ, except there bee first an examination

mination had. Whereby it is manifest, how ridiculous the Papists were, which wrest this to auricular confession. For the sacrificers were not present, into whose eares priuily all of them should whisper their owne sins: neither is there mention made of all their sinnes, neyther is it sayd that Iohn commanded, or gaue his Disciples an ordinary maner of confessing: And that wee may graunt the Papistes that, which they require: Confession shall belong to them onely, that shall be catechized, and after Baptisme it shall haue no place. Truly they against the example of Iohn doe prescribe a law of Confession after Baptisme.

Math. 3.

Marke.

Luke. 3.

7. Now, when hee saw many of the Pharises and of the Saduces come to his baptisme, hee sayd vnto them, O generation of vipers, who hath forewarned you to flee from the anger to come?

8. Bring forth therefore fruite worthy amendment of life.

9. And thinke not to say with your selues, wee haue Abraham to our father: for I say vnto you, that God is able of these stones to rayse vp children vnto Abraham.

10. And now also is the axe put to the roote of the trees: therefore euerie tree, which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewne downe, & cast into the fire.

7. Then sayd hee to the people that were come out to bee baptised of him: O generation of vipers, who hath forewarned you to flee from the wrath to come.

8. Bring forth therefore fruite worthy amendment of life, & begin not to say with your selues, wee haue Abraham to our father: for I say vnto you, GOD is able of these stones to raise vp children to Abraham.

9. Now also is the axe laid vnto the roote of the trees: therefore euerie tree, which bringeth not forth good fruite, shall be hewen downe, and cast into the fire.

10. Then the people asked him, saying, what shall wee doe then?

11. And he answered, and said vnto them: he that hath two coates, lette him part with him that hath none: and he that hath meate, let him doe likewise.

12. Then came there Publicans also to be baptised: and sayd vnto him, maister, what shall we doe?

13. And he sayde vnto them, require no more then that, which is appoynted vnto you.

14. The soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying: And what shall we doe? And he sayd vnto them, do violence to no man, neyther accuse any falsly, and be content with your wages.

MAT. 7. When hee saw many of the Pharises. Here Math. and Luke do declare

declare that Iohn did not onely generally preach repentance, but also that hee applied his speech to the persons. And truly it will bee a cold manner of teaching, except the teachers doe wisely consider what the time requireth, & what is fitte for the persons: and there is not in this behalfe any thing more vnequall then a perpetuall equalitie. And for this cause it is sayde that Iohn did more tenderly handle the Pharises and the Saduces: because that through the hypocrisie and pride, wherein they swelled, it seemed meete that they should be more sharply punished then the common sort of men. But that we may well vnderstand his purpose, it is to be knowne that there is no people more without sense and feeling then the hypocrites, which with an outward shewe of holines deceiue themselves and others. For as God thundereth euery where against the whole world: so they in a false imagination frame vnto themselves a sanctuary: because they are perswaded that they haue nothing to do with the iudgement of God. If any thinke that Iohn dealt preposterously, that at the first salutation he entertayned them so hardly: I answer that they were not vnknewe vnto him: and the knowledge which he had was not by custome or experience, but rather by the secret reuelation of the Spirit: wherefore they were no whit the lesse to be spared, least with the greater pride they should retorne home. If any againe shal object, that they were not to be feared with so sharp a rebuking, which by baptism professed that they woulde become other men: an answer is also readie, they which are accustomed to lie to God, and to please themselves, and shew deceit & dissimulation for the truth, are more hardly to be vrged to true repentance. For there is, as I sayd, a wonderfull obstinacie in hypocrites, therefore vntill they be skoured with violence, they hold very fast their shew.

Now that Iohn reproveth and rebuketh them openly before all men, is for an example, in which sense Luke reporteth that he spake this to the people: though Iohn pinched but few men, yet he had regard of all, that he might strike a feare into them: as Paul, 1. Tim. 5. 20. commandeth, that in open reprovings this profit should be looked for. Therefore he peculiarly speaking to the Pharises and Saduces, doth in their person admonish all the rest, that they shoulde not shew forth a fained shew of repentance, for a true affection.

Furthermore it was greatly for the profit of all the people to knowe what manner of men the Saduces and the Pharises were, by whom the worshippe of GOD was miserably corrupted, the Church wasted, and the whole religion ouerthrowne, and to bee short, who had with their corruptions extinguished the lighte of GOD, and with their sinnes had infected all things. Therefore it is probable that Iohn did openly sette vpon the Pharises, that hee might prouide for the whole Church of GOD: that they should no more with a vaine shewe holde the eyes of the simple, nor oppresse the people with their wicked tyrannie. And therein was also shewed his wonderfull constancie, that though they excelled all other: yet hee spared not their dignitie, but sharply, as they were worthy, he brought them into course. So it becometh all godly teachers to be bolde: that they should not feare any power of men, but that without feare they shoulde strue to throwe downe euery high thing, which listeth vp it selfe against Christ. If that they which willingly came to Baptisme, that they might giue their name to the Gospell,

were so sharply saluted by the instrument of the holy Ghost : how must wee then doe at this day with the professed enemies of Christ, which not only stubbornly refuse all taste of sound doctrine, but more violently go on with sword and fire to blot out the name of Christ ? Certainly if thou shouldest compare the Pope and his filthy cleargie, they shall bee very gently dealt with, if they bee cast into one bundle together. Wherefore let them quarrell not with vs, but with the spirit of God, whose cares are so delicate, that they can abide nothing to bee spoken sharply against the Pope. Yet let godly teachers take heede to themselves, while they are carryed with a godly zeale against the tyrantes of the Church, least they myxe the affections of the fleshe. And because that no vehemency canne bee approoued of GOD, but that which is moderated by the wisdom of the spirit, let them not onely restraîne their affections, but let them deliuer and commit themselves to the holy Ghost to bee gouerned, least any thing passe from them without consideration.

He calleth them generation of Vipers, rather then Vipers, that hee might lay that venymous payson to all the sort of them: for he would not condemne only these few, which were there present, but the whole body : as if he should say, that both the sortes did but engender serpents. There were great dissensions betweene them, but the contempt of God, a wicked desire of rule, a hatred of sound doctrine, and a heape of many sinnes. *Who hath forwarned you ?* Because he suspected their repentance, he doubting it, enquireth with admiration, whether it be possible that they should repent from the heart. By this meanes hee strineth them to a more neare examinatio of their conscience, that they should sitte themselves more deeply, & that all flatteries being remoued far from them, they might exercise a more seuerè censure in calling their sinnes into question.

Wrath is here taken for the iudgement of God, as in diuers other places it is vsed : as when Paule sayth, Rom. 4. 15. & 12. 19. the lawe worketh wrath, and giue ye place to wrath. And he calleth it to come, which hangeth ouer their heades, least according to their wont, they nourish vp themselves in securitie. Yet he therefore maketh mention of the time to come : because the hypocrites as long as GOD spareth them, do carelessly despise his threats : for they are not wakned, except they be stricken hard. For though the wrath of God flowe forth, and that his rodde doe strike the whole earth, yet the hypocrites doe alwayes hope that they are free.

To flee the wrath of God, is here taken in good parte : for it is as much as to seeke to the meanes to appease God, that he might cease to bee angry with vs. For a great number of men, that they might escape the wrath of God do withdraw themselves from his hand and iudgement, but so the sinner profiteth nothing by fleeing from GOD, but doth rather more and more encrease his wrath vpon him.

MAT. LV. 8. *Bring forth therefore frutes.* He confirmeth that which I sayde before, that the repentaunce which is testified in woordes is of no value, except they prooue the same in deedes : for it is a thing more precious, then that there shoulde bee a light and vaine opinion of the same. Therefore Iohn denyeth, that the open testimony which they gaue was sufficient :

But he saith that in processe of time it shalbe reuealed by their workes, whether they do earnestly repent. It is to bee noted that good workes are called the fruits of repentance: for repentance is inward, which is placed in the heart and the minde: but then in the chaung of the life it bringeth forth the fruites of the same. And because that in Popery all this point of doctrine was filthily corrupted, this difference is to be holden, that repentance is an inward renewing of a man, which springeth forth in outward life, as the tree bringeth forth fruit out of it.

M A T. 9. *Thinke not to say with your selues.* **LV. 8.** *Begin not to say.* Sith it is certaine that there is but one meaning of both these speeches, we do easily gather what Iohn would. The hypocrits doe either sleepe in their sins, or licentiously & proudly vaunt theselues vntill they be oppressed: but when they are cited to the tribunall feare of God, then they carefully seeke meanes to escape, & lurking corners, or pretend some colour: Therefore Iohn thus speaketh vnto the Pharisees and Saduces. Now that you are sharply reprov'd of me, doe not as such as you are, vse to do: that is, seeke not a remedie by a vaine & false pretence. And he wresteth frō them that wicked hope, wherewith they were bewitched: the couenant which God made with Abrahā was vnto them in steade of a shielde to couer an euil conscience, not that they setled their hope in the person of one man: but because that God had adopted the whole stocke of Abraham. In the meane while they thought not, that none are to bee accounted of the seed of Abrahā, but they which follow his sayth, & the couenant of God is not ratified, that it may profit to saluation but by sayth. And that clause *in your selues* is not superfluous: for although in speech they did not boast themselues to be the sons of Abraham, yet inwardly they pleased themselues with this title: so that the hypocrites are nothing more ashamed to mocke God then men.

God is able. The Iewes flatter theselues almost with the same pretence, which the Papists at this day do insolently challeng to themselues. It is necessary that there should be a Church in the world: for God will bee knowne, and haue his name called vpon in the world, and the Church cannot be other where but with vs, with whom the Lord hath made his couenant. The priests and other, which had the gouernmēt and authoritie, were especially puffed vp with this arrogancie: for they accounted the common people prophane and accursed, as wee reade in Iohn, 7. 49. And they thought theselues to be the holy first fruits: as at this day the horned bishops, Abbots, Canons, Monks, Sorbonists, & all the sacrificers, being lift vp with the proud title of the Cleargie, doe in comparison of theselues despise the laitie. This error doth Iohn reprove & refell, in that they doe to straighly restrain the promise of God, shewing that though God had none of them, that yet hee would not be without a Church. Therefore the meaning of the words is, God made a couenant with Abrahā & his seed. One thing deceiueth you, that whē you are more then degenerat, you think your selues to be the only sons of Abrahā: but god will frō another place rayse vp a new seed to Abraham, which doth not now appeare: & he speaketh in the datiuē case: *He wil raise vp childre vnto Abraham*, that they might know the promise of God was not to no effecte, and that Abraham, who obeyed him, shoulde not bee decieued, although there wanted seede in them, so from the beginning

ning of the world, the Lord was true to his seruantes, neither did he euer sayle in performing his promise of shewing fauour to their children, although he reiected the hypocrites. That many thinke that Iohn speaketh this of the calling of the gentils; seemeth not to mee to be of force: but because that it seemed incredible to these proud men, that the Church might bee transferred to any other place, he admonisheth them that God hath means to preferue his church, which they did not thinke of: as if he should make him children of stones.

MAT. 10. LV. 9. *Now also is the axe,* After that Iohn had taken that couer of vaine hope from the hypocrites, he pronounceth that the iudgement of God is nigh. He had sayd before, that they being cast off, that God should not want a people. now he addeth that God himselfe is now in the same, that hee might drie the vnworthy out of the Church, as barren trees vse to be cut vpp. The summe is, that the hand of God is now stretched forth to purge the church for the grace of God doth neuer shew it selfe for the saluation of the godly: but withal his iudgement commeth forth for the destruction of the world, and that for two causes: because that then the Lord separateth his from the reprobate, and the vnthankfulnes of the world prouoketh his wrath a new. Wherefore it is no maruaile, if the preaching of the Gospell, and the coming of Christ doe put the axe to cut away the corrupt trees, and shoulde dayly halten the vengeance of God against the wicked.

LV. 11. *The people asked him.* A true affection of repentance engendreth this carefulnesse, that the sinner desirously inquireth what God willed and commanded, and the answer of Iohn doth breifly define the fruites woorthy of repentance. For the world alwayes desireth to bee discharged of the ceremonies towards God, and doth nothing more readily then fet faigned and deuised worshippings before God, so oft as he calleth to repentance. But what fruites doth the Baptist commend in this place? The duties of charitie, and of the seconde table, not that God neglecteth the outward profession of godlines, and of his worship: but because this note of difference is more certaine, and doeth often lesse deceiue. For the hypocrites doe plainly endeavour, that they might shew themselves worshippers of God in ceremonies, and yet let passe the care of true righteousness, when they are eyther vnkinde to their neighbours, or giuen to deceites and spoyles. Wherefore necessarily they are to be called to a straighter examination, whether they liue honestly amongst men, whether they helpe the poore, whether they spare them in miserie, whether they louingly communicate those thinges, which the Lord hath giuen them. For this cause Christ in Mathew 23. 23. calleth iustice, mercie, and truth, the chiefe poyntes of the lawe, and the scripture in diuerse places commendeth iustice and iudgement.

This is to bee noted, that the duties of charitie are first named, not that they excell the worshippe of GOD: but as the witnesse of the godlinesse of menne, that their dissimulation may bee layde open, which bragge that with their mouth, which is farre from their hearte. But it is demanded whether Iohn layd this lawe precisely vpon all them, which Christ had prepared to be his Disciples, that they shoulde not haue two coates. First it is to bee noted, that this is a figuratiue speache, from the parte to the whole:

because that vnder one kind there is comprehended a generall doctrine. Hereof it followeth that such a meaning is to be gathered, as agreeth to the rule of charitie, which is prescribed of God: namely, that euery man of his abundance should helpe the neede of the poore. For the Lord doth not wiest a tribute from them, that they should giue sorrowfully and vnwillingly, which by compulsion should be constrained to do that they would not: but he loueth cheerefull and willing giuers, as Paul sayth 2. Cor. 9. 7. This I speake for this purpose: because it auayleth much that men should be perswaded, that that which they offer of their goods is an acceptable sacrifice of a sweet fauor vnto god, and they doe not onely cast a feare vpon the consciences, but they drowne them in dispaire, whosoener make a law that no man should possesse any thing of his own. But there neede no long confutation to bee vsed against these fanaticall men, which so bitingly snatch at the letter. If it be not lawfull to haue two coates, the same is to be sayd of dishes, of salt sellers, of shirts, and of all household stuffe. But by the text it appeareth, that Iohn meant nothing lesse, then to ouerthrow the politike estate: whereby wee gather that hee commanded nothing els, then that the rich men, according to their abilities, shoulde bestow vpon the poore, that which their necessitie required: as if hee should haue sayd, looke what things your neighbours do want, for the sustentation of their life, and you haue abundance of, that your abundance may helpe their neede. Furthermore, how much more God nourisheth vs: so much more must euery man be ware, that wee cocker not our selues. Let rather the necessitie of brethren vrge vs, and what benefites of GOD fouer wee haue by vs, let them enforce vs to charitable well doing.

12. *And the Publicans came.* He doth not onely generally exhort the Publicans, that they should repent, but he requireth those things, which belong to their calling. For we know that besides the generall rule of the law, euery one must looke what the estate of life, whereunto he is called requireth. Loue is generally commanded to all christians: but there follow particular duties, where in the doctour to the Church, the magistrate or prince to the people: and againe the people to the magistrate, the husband to the wife, and againe, the wife to him: and last, the children and the parents are bound the one to the other. Furthermore, because that they vexed (as it is a couetous, rauenous, & cruell kind of men) the comon people with vniust exactiōs: the baptist reprobeth those faults wherewith that people was most infected, forbidding that they shoulde not exceede measure in exacting tributes: yet hereby we gather, that it is no lesse lawfull for a Christian to gather tribute, then it is granted to the magistrate, to lay it vpon them. The same is to be thought of warfare, Iohn commandeth not the souldiours to throwe away their weapons, and to forsake their calling, but he forbiddeth vnder the pretence of warfare to spoyle the poore people, to oppresse the innocent with iniuries, to go abroad after the maner of the eues, as many were wont: so in these words there is a priuate approbation of a politicke estate. It is a friuolous cauill, that heere are onely deliuered instructions for the rude, which are farre vnderneath a Christian perfection. It was the office of Iohn to make the people perfect to the Lord: and it is not to be doubted but that wholly he applyed himselfe faithfully in this matter. And truely they

diffame

disfame the Gospell with a sacrilegious accusation, which make it contrary to the gouernement of men, as if Christ should destroy that, which his heauenly father had ordayned. For without the sword the lawes are dead, & there is no power nor authoritie in iudgements. Neither hath the magistrate only neede of an executioner, but also of other officers, of which number are soldiours, where peace cannot otherwise bee preserved, but by their ayd & hand: onely the ende is to bee confirmed, that Princes make not a iesting sporte at mans blood, that soldiours placed to bestow their helpe to kill, be not caried with the desire of gaine to cruelty, but that they both bee drawne with the necessity and respect of publike profit.

Matth. 3.

11. *Indeede I baptise you with water, to amendment of life: but hee that commeth after me, is mightier then I, whose shoes I am not worthy to beare, he will baptise you with the holy Ghost, and with fire.*

12. *Which hath his fanne in his hande, and will make cleane his floore, and gather his wheate into his garner, but will burne vp the chaf with vnquenchable fire*

Matth. 3.

7. *And preached saying, A stronger then I cometh after me, whose shoes I am not worthy to steepe downe, and vnlose.*

8. *True it is, I haue baptised you with water: but hee wil baptise you with the holy Ghost.*

Luke. 3.

15. *As the people waited, and all menne mused in their heartes, of Iohn, if he were not the Christ.*

16. *Iohn answered, and sayde to them all: In deede I baptise you with water: but one stronger then I cometh, whose shoes I am not worthy to vnlose: he wil baptise you with the holy Ghoste and with fire.*

17. *Whose fanne is in his hand, & hee will make cleane his floore, and will gather the wheat into his garner: but the chaf will he burne vp with fire that neuer shalbe quenched.*

18. *Thus then exhorting with many other thinges, hee preached vnto the people.*

The euangelistes reported the same wordes of the Baptist. In this one thing Luke is more plentifull, in that the first declareth vpon what occasion this Sermon was made: namely, because it was in daunger least the people through a false opinion should giue the honour due to Christ, to him. Therefore that hee might speedily take away the occasion of the error, he openly testifieth that he is not Christ, & so putteth a difference betweene himselfe and Christ, that hee might giue him his right. And this hee doth willingly, that he might deliuer his disciples to Christ from hand (as they say) to hand: but hee preuenteth it the speedilyer, least by holding his peace the longer, hee might confirme the error of the people.

When hee sayth that a stronger then hee shall come, he meaneth one endued with a farre other power and dignitie, in respect of whom hee himselfe is to be brought into order. And he useth common phrases, wher-

with hee so extolleth the glory of Christe, that in comparison of him, hee declareth that hee himselſe is nothing. This yet is the chiefe, that he accounteth Christe the authour of the spirituall baptisme, and that he is the minister onely of the outward. And it seemeth to bee an answer to a secret obiection, if peradventure any shoulde object to what ende belonged that baptisme, which he tooke to himselſe: for it were not a matter of light weight, to bring any thing into the Church of God, but especially to professe a newe kinde of instruction which should bee more perfect then the law of God: therefore hee answereth that he taketh nothing in hand rashly, that yet hee was the minister of the outward seale, which diminished nothing from the power and glory of Christ, whereby wee gather that his purpose was not to distinguish his baptisme from that, which Christ commanded to his disciples, and whose perpetuall vse he willed to flourish in his Church. Neyther doth he appose the visible signe, to the other signe, but comparing the persons of the Lorde and of the seruant together, he teacheth what is proper to the Lord, and what is to be attributed to the seruant. Neither let that opinion hinder vs, which now long ago was spread euery where, that the baptisme of Iohn doth differ from ours: but wee must learne to iudge by the matter it selfe rather then by the error of men. And truly the comparison which they imagine should be too absurd: for thereby it followeth that the holy Ghost shoulde bee giuen at this day by the ministers: againe it shoulde follow that the baptisme of Iohn was a dead signe, and voyde of all power. Thirdly, it shoulde follow, that wee had not a baptisme common to Christe and to vs, seeing it sufficiently appeareth, that by this seale he sanctifieth that fellowship, which he vouchsafeth to haue with vs, while that in his owne body he consecrated baptisme. Therefore here is to be holden that, which I sayde before, that Iohn here simply discerneth the person of Christe, from himselſe and all other ministers of baptisme, that the Lorde might bee aboue the seruantes. And here is gathered a generall doctrine, what are the duties of men in baptisme, and what is proper to the sonne of God: for the onely administration of the outward and visible signe is committed to men: but the truth it selfe resteth in the power of Christ alone. The scripture doth sometime improperly assigne that to men, which Iohn here challengeth to Christe alone, and affirmeth that belongeth not to men: but then the scripture waigeth not what specially man hath of himselſe, but simply teacheth the power and the profit of the signes, and how God worketh with his spirit through the same. But here is a distinction made betweene Christ & his ministers, least that which is worthily due to the one, the world shoulde wickedly giue to the other: as it is not more bent to any thing, the to adorne the creatures with those things that belong to God. And this obseruation shal helpe vs out of many difficulties. we know how great iars there are in our age about the vse and efficacy of the signes, al which may be answered, that the whole institution of the Lord comprehendeth the authour himselſe, & the power of the spirit, together with the figure, and the minister: but whereas the minister is compared with the Lord, that the Lord may haue all, & the ministers brought to nothing.

11. *With the holy Ghost, and with fire.* It is demanded why Iohn also sayde not, that it is onely Christ, which washeth our soules with his blood. Namely

Namely, because that the washing also it selfe is wrought by the power of the spirite, it was sufficient by the onely name of the spirite to expresse the whole effect of baptisme. And the meaning is plaine, that Christe alone doth giue what grace so euer the outward Baptisme doth figure, because that he sprink- leth the consciences with his blood, and he himselfe mortifieth the old man, and giueth the spirit of regeneration. The word *Fire* is added instead of an Epi- thyte, and is applyed to the spirit, because that it so purgeth our filthinesse, as golde is tryed in the fire: As Iohn 3. 5. metaphorically calleth it water.

M A T. 12. *Which hath his fanne.* In the former sentence Iohn preach- ed of the grace of Christe, that the Iewes mighte giue themselues to him to bee renewed: now also he speaketh of iudgement, that hee might strike a feare into the contemners. For sith many hypocrites doe proudly refuse the grace of Christ offered them, it is also necessary to pronounce vnto them that vengeance which remaineth for them: for this cause Iohn doth here describe Christe as a seuerer iudge against the vnbeleeuers. And this order of teaching must be obserued of vs, that the hypocrites may know, that they shall not goe unpunished which reiect Christ, that they being raised out of their sluggishnes may begin to feare him as a reuenger, whom they haue despised as the authour of saluation. Also it is not to be doubted but that Iohn would teach what Christ would worke through his Gospel. Therefore the preaching of the Gospell is a fanne: because that before the Lord sitt vs, the whole worlde is full of confu- sion, euery man seeketh to please himselfe, and the good are mixed with the e- uill, and last of all it pleaseth them to wallow in chaffe. But where Christ com- meth soorth with his Gospell, while hee reproboueth the consciences, & citeth to the tribunall seate of God, the chaffe is fanned away, which before coue- red the most part of the floore. And though the Gospell purgeth every man from chaffe, yet Iohn here compareth the reprobate to chaffe, and the faithfull to wheate. Furthermore, the floore is not taken for the worlde (as some ima- gin) but for the Church: for it is to be noted to whom Iohn speaketh. When the Iewes were lift vp with the bare title, Iohn warneth them that they doe foolishly to be proud, because that they possesse a place for a time in the Church of God, out of the which they were shortly to bee throwne as chaffe out of the floore. In this maner he reprehendeth the corrupt state of the Church: because that it was full of huskes, weedes, and other filthy thinges, but was presently to bee purged with the liuely voyce of the Gospell. But howe is Christ sayd to purge the chaffe from the wheate, who can find nothing in men but meere chaffe? The answer is easie, the Elect are made into wheate, that they bee- ing taken from the chaffe, may bee gathered into the barne. But Christ began this cleansing, and daily goeth forward with the same, yet he shall not fully per- forme the same before the latter day: therefore Iohn calleth vs thither. But we must remeber that the faithfull now at this day through hope do enter into the garner of the Lord, that there at the length in deede they may haue an eternall seate. And the reprobate now through their guiltinesse do conceiue a heat of that fire, the perfect burning whereof, they at the last day shall feele. I know that many haue subtilly disputed of the eternall fire, wherein the wicked shall bee tormented after the iudgement: but it may be gathered out of

many places of the scripture, that it is a metaphoricall kind of speaking. For if there be appointed a reall or mereriell fire (as they call it) then must there also bee added brinestone, and a fanne to kindle it : because that there is mention made of them both in Isaias, chap. 30. 33. Certainly there is no other maner of fire, then worme : for if by the content of all, it is received that there is a metaphor in the name of worme, then is the same to be thought of fire. Wherefore letting passe the speculations wherein vaine men weary theiuelues without profit, let it suffice vs to vnderstand, that with these maner of speeches, for the rudennesse of our capacitie, is that horrible torment noted, which at this day canne neither be conceiued in mans vnderstanding, nor expressed in wordes.

Matthew. 3.

13. Then came Iesus from Galile to Iordan, vnto Iohn to be baptised of him.

14. But Iohn put him backe saying: I haue need to be baptised of thee, & comest thou tome

15. Then Iesus answering, said to him: let be now: for thus it becometh to fulfil all righteousnesse, so he suffered him.

16 And Iesus when he was baptised, came streight out of the water, & lo the heauens were opened vnto him, and Iohn saw the spirit of God descending like a doue, & lighting vpon him.

17. And lo a voice came from heauen, saying: This is my beloued son, in who I am wel pleased.

Marke. 1.

9. And it came to passe in those dayes, that Iesus came from Nazareth a cittie of Galile, and was baptised of Iohn in Iordan.

10. And as soone as hee was come out of the water, Iohn sawe the heauens clouen in twaine, and the holy Ghoste descending vpon him like a Doue

11 Then there was a voyce from heauen, saying: thou art my beloued sonne in whom I am well pleased.

Luke. 3.

21. Now it came to passe as all the people were baptised, & that Iesus was baptised, and did praye, that the heauens opened.

22. And the holy Ghost came downe in a bodily shape like a Doue vpon him, and there was a voyce from heauen, saying: Thou art my beloued sonne in thee I am wel pleased.

33. And Iesus himself began to be about thirty yeare of age.

12. To be baptised of him. To what end the sonne of God would be baptised, we doe partly gather by his answer. First there is a special reason brought why he was baptised as we are, that the faithfull might more certainly be perswaded that they are grafted into his body, and buried with him through baptism. But the end which he proposeth here, is larger : for so it becometh to fulfill all righteousnesse. The word righteousnesse doth often signifie as much in the scripture as the obseruing of the law. And so this place may be expounded, that it became Christ, in that he willingly submitted himselfe to the law to performe the same in euery point. Yet I had rather take the same more simply in this manner, as if Christ should haue sayde, omit now to speake of my dignitie : for the question is not, which of vs two excelleth other, but we must rather looke what our calling requireth, and what is enioyned vs of God the father : for this was the generall cause why Christ was baptised, that he might performe obedience to his father, and the speciall caule was, that he in his owne body might consecrate baptism, that it might be common to vs with him.

14. I haue neede to be baptised of thee. It is certaine that Iohn knewe Christ to be not only a notable prophet as many do foolishly dream, but for the sonne

son of God as he was. Otherwise he should haue bin iniurious to God submitting his holy calling to a mortall man. But howe hee knew this, let the readers learne out of the 1. cha 15. of Iohn. And this was a probable cause of refusall, that Christ had no need of baptisme: but in this doth Iohn faile, that he considereth not that he demaendeth baptisme for others sakes. Therefore Christ commaundeth him to consider what belongeth to him that occupieth the place of a seruant. because that voluntary subiection doth derogate nothing from his glory. And although in that so great a man some part of his office was hid for a time: yet that periculer error should not hinder the Baptist, but that rightly & lawfully he should haue executed his office. By which example we are taught, that they which haue an office inioyned the of the Lord, may not do any thing rashly for any reuelation, though at the first they do not vnderstand euery thing annexed to their office, or depending vpon the same. His modestie is also to be noted, that he ceasing fro his own opinion, doth presently obey Christ. 16. *To the heauens were opened.* The opening of the heauens is some time taken for the manifestation of the heauenly glory, and here also it signifieth a diuision of the visible heauen, so that Iohn might see somewhat aboute the planets & the stars. for the meaning of Markes words cannot be other, who saith that he saw the heauens clouen in twain, But more narrowly to inquire what maner of diuision this was it doth neither appertaine much to the mater, neither doth it profit: for it is sufficient to know, that this was a token of the presence of God. Further, when the Euangelists say that Iohn sawe the holy Ghost, it is probable that the heauens were especially opened for his cause, though I repugn it not, but that Christ also as he was man, was made more certaine of his calling. And to this purpose the words of Luke seeme to tend, when he saith: that while Christ praied, the heauens opened: for although he poured out his praiers alwaies for the profit of others: yet he had need as he was man, seeing he was to fight so hard a battell, to be armed with a singular power of the spirit. But here arise 2. questions. The first is, why the spirit then descended vpon Christ, which was in him beefore. This question is answered by the place of Isai 61. 1. which is entreated of in another place. The spirit of the Lord vpon me, therefore hath the Lord annointed me, to preach glad tidings to the poore he hath sent me. Although Christ wonderfully excelled with a singular grace of the spirite, yet he kept himselfe at home as a priuate man, vntill he was brought forth by his father. Therefore now when the appointed time is come wherein he should prepare himselfe to fulfill the office of a redeemer, he is indued with a new power of the spirite, and that not so much for his sake as for others. For this was done of purpose, that the faithfull mighte honour and reuerently imbrace his diuine power, and that the infirmities of the flesh should not be condemned in him. That same also was the cause why he deferred his baptisme to the 30. yeare of his age. Baptisme was a beginning of the Gospell, and therefore together with the preaching of the Gospell it began. And Christ preparing himselfe to preach the Gospell, was by Baptisme as well entred into his office, as instructed by the holy spirit. The holy spirit therefore appeared vnto Iohn descending vpon Christ, to admonish that nothing carnall or earthly, should be sought for in Christ, but that he came from heauen as a diuine man in whom the power of the holy spirite raigenth.

Wee

Wee certainly know him to be God manifested in the flesh, but in the person of a seruant, and in his humane nature there is also a celestially power to be considered. The seconde question is, why the spirite appeared in the likenesse of a Doue, rather then of fire: whose answer dependeth of an analogie or similitude of a thing signified with the figure. We know what the Prophet Esay attributeth to Christ, chap. 42. 3. A brused reede shall he not breake, smoking flaxe shall he not quench: hee shall not crie, nor his voyce shall be heard. For this gentleness of Christ, wherein he louingly and gently calleth, and daily biddeth sinners to the hope of saluation, the holy spirite descended vpon him in likenesse of a Doue. And in this signe there is a notable pledge of most sweete comfort giuen vnto vs, that we should not feare to come vnto Christ, who cometh forth vnto vs not with a fearefull power of the spirite, but endued with a louing and pleasant grace. *Hee sawe the holy spirite*: Namely Iohn: for it presently followeth that the spirite descended vpon Christ. Now here ariseth the third question, how Iohn could see the spirite: I answer, seeing the spirite of God is spread in euery place, and filleth the heauen and the earth, a descending is vnproperly attributed to it. The same is to be accounted of the sight, for although in it selfe it is inuisible, yet it is sayd to be seene, where as there is shewed some signe of his presence. Iohn seeth not the essence of the spirite, which falleth not vnder the sense of the eye, neyther did hee see the power it selfe, which is not comprehended by humane sense, but onely by the vnderstanding of faith: but he seeth the likenesse of a Doue, vnder the which God shewed the presence of his spirite. Therefore it is a Metonymicall kinde of speech, wherein the name of a spirituall thing is giuen to a visible signe. For as they do folishly & preposterously vrge the letter, that they might include the signified thing in the signe, so it is to be noted that in these kindes of speaking is noted a coniunction of the thing with the signe. According to this meaning the bread of the holy supper is called the body of Christe: because it testifieth that it is truly giuen to vs for foode. Yet that withall is to be remembred which I now touched, there must not be imagined a descention of the thing signified, that it should be sought in the signe, as though it were there locally included: but this one thing ought enough, and more then enough to suffice vs: that the Lord by his secret power will performe whatsoeuer he hath promised vs by figures. Many also rather curiously, then profitably, doe demand whether this Doue were a perfect body or but a ghost. Though that the wordes of *LUKE* seeme to affirme that it was not the substance of a body, but onely a likenesse, yet least any man should thereby take occasion of quarelling, I leaue it as I find it.

17. *A voice from heauen.* That voice did sound out of that diuision of the heauens, whereof mention is made beefore: that thereby his maiestie might the more certainly be manifested vnto him. Also when Christ came openly to execute the office of a mediator, he was set frō the father with this testimony to vs that we hauing this pledg of our adoption, might without fear call god himselfe our father. The title of a sonne doth truly & naturally belong to Christ alone: but yet the sonne of God was shewed in our flesh, that that one which the father hath by his owne right, might also obtaine the same for vs. Wherefore
God

God bringing forth Christ a mediator for vs, with this title of sonne, he declar-
eth that he will be a father to vs all. To the same purpose appertaineth the E-
pithyte of beloued, for that we of our selues being hated of God, it is necessary
that his fatherly loue should flow vnto vs by Christ. And the best interpreter of
this place, is Paule to the Ephesians, chap. 1. 6. when he sayth that we haue ob-
tained fauour in his beloued son, that we might be beloued of God. The which
is also more fully expresse in this clause. *In whom I am well pleased.* For he doth
declare that the loue of God doth so rest in Christ, that he wil poure forth him
selfe from him vnto vs all, & not to vs onely, but also to the angels themselves:
not that they needed a reconciliation, which neuer were at discord with God:
but because that they do not perfectly adioyne vnto God, but by the benefite of
the head. For the which cause he is also called the first borne of euery creature,
Col. 1. 15. & againe Paul in another place teacheth that he came, that he might
gather what thinges soeuer, are in heauen and in earth, Col. 1. 20.

Matthew. 4.

Marke 1.

Luke 4.

1. Then was Iesus led aside
of the spirite into the wildernes, to
be tempted of the deuill.

2. And when hee had fasted
forty dayes and forty nightes, hee
was afterward hungry.

3. Then came to him the tempt-
er, and sayd: if thou be the sonne
of God, commaund that these stones
bee made bread.

4. But he answering, sayd: It
is written, men shall not liue by
breade onely, but by euery worde
that proceedeth out of the mouth
of God.

12. And im-
mediatly the spi-
rite driueth him
into the wilder-
nesse.

13. And he was
there in the wil-
dernes forty dayes
and was tempted
of Satan: hee was
also with the wilde
beasts, and the an-
gels ministred vn-
to him.

1. And Iesus full of the ho-
ly Ghost returned from Iordan,
and was led by the spirit into the
wilderneffe.

2. And was there fortye
dayes tempted of the deuill, and
in those dayes hee did eate no-
thing: but when they were en-
ded, he was hungry.

3. Then the deuill sayd vnto
him: if thou be the Sonne of God
commaund this stone that it bee
made bread.

4. But Iesus answered him,
sayng: It is written, That man
shall not liue by bread onely, but
by euery word of God.

1. Then Iesus was led aside. Christ went a side into the desert for two causes:
First that after the fast of forty dayes as a new man, or rather a heauenly, hee
might come forth to execute his office: Then that he shoulde not enter into so
hard and notable an office, except he were tryed with temptations, as if hee
should so lay the foundatiō of his first exercise. Therefore let vs know that Christ
by the direction of the spirite was led from the company of men, that the great
doctour of the Church, and embassadour of God shoulde come abroade as
one rather sent from heauen, then taken out of some little towne and cōmon
sort of men. So God vsed Moses, when by his hand hee woulde deliuer his
lawe, hee tooke him into the mount Sinai, and being led aside from the sight
of the people, he kept him as it were in a holy sanctuary. Exod. 24. 12 It bee
hooued Christe to bee adorned with no fewer or lesse tokens of diuine grace
and signes of power then Moses, least the maiesty of the Gospell shoulde
be

bee lesse then of the lawe: for if the Lorde thought that doctrine which was the minister of death worthy of rare honour, howe much more honour doeth the doctrine of life deserue? And if the shadowed figure of GOD hadde so greate light, then with howe perfecte brightnesse is it meete to haue his countenance beautified, which appeareth in the Gospell? This same was the ende of his fast: for Christe abstayned not from meate and drinke, that hee might giue an instruction of temperance: but that hee might thereby haue the more authoritie, while hee being exempt from the common sorte of men, doeth come forth as an Angell from heauen, and not as a man from the earth, For I beseech you what maner of vertue was there in that abstinencie, not to eate meate, whome no hunger moued to desire the same? For it is certaine, and the Euangelistes doe plainly pronounce, that hee no otherwise bave the hunger, then if he had not bene cloathed with flesh. Wherefore it were a meere folly to establish a Lenten fast, as they call it, as an imitatio of Christ. For there is no greater reason why wee at this day should follow the example of Christ, then had in times past the holy Prophets, and other fathers vnder the law to imitate the fast of Moses. And wee know that this neuer came in their minde. God almost for the same cause continued Eliah fasting in the mount, because he was the minister that should restore the law. They faime themselves to be followers of Christe, which through the Lent do daily fast: that is, they so stufe their belly at dinner, that vnto supper time they easily passe the time without meat. What likenesse haue they with the sonne of God? Greater was the sparing of the elders: but they also had no assinitie with the fast of Christe, no more then the abstinence of men cometh neere to the hunger of Angels. Adde also that neither Christ nor Moses did yearly keepe a solemne fast, but both of them did it onely once in their whole life. And I would to God that they had onely played like apes with these follies. But it was a wicked & a detestable scorning of Christ, in that they attempted in their fained fasting to frame themselves after his doing. It is most vile superstition that they persvade themselves that it is a worke meritorious, and to be some part of godlinesse and diuine worshippe. But this contumely is not to bee borne: first against God, that they obscure his notable myracle. Then against Christ because they taking his glory from him, decke themselves with his spoyle. Thirdly against the Gospell, from the which no small credite is taken, if this fast of Christ bee not acknowledged to bee a seale of the same. God shewed a singular myracle when he kept his sonne from the necessitie of eating, and doe they not in a madde boldnesse spit at GOD, when they affect to doe the same by their owne power? Christ was noted with diuine glory by his fasting. And shall he bee spoyled of his glory and brought in order, when as all mortall men shall make themselves his fellows? this was the end which God appointed to Christes fast, that it should be a seale to the Gospell: They that apply it to any other vſe: doe they not take so much from the dignity of the Gospell? Therefore let this counterfeiting cease, which peruerteth the counsell of God, and the whole order of his workes. But of feastes in their kinde I speake not, (which I wish were more common amongst vs, so that the same were pure) for it was meete to shewe for what

purpose Christ fasted.

Also Sathan tooke occasion of his hunger to tempt Christ, as a little after shall be shewed more at large, now it must be generally seene why God would haue him tempted. For the wordes of Mathew and Marke doe found that hee was brought into this combat by the determinate counsell of God, which say that hee was led by the spirite for this cause into the desert. I doubt not but that God in the person of his Sonne, would shewe as in a most cleare glasse how deadly and importune an enemy of mans saluation Sathan is. For whereof commeth it to passe that hee shoulde assaile Christ so sharply, and shoulde poure out all his forces and violence against him at this time which the Euangelistes note, but because hee sawe him at the commaundement of his Father, prepared for the redemption of mankind? therefore hee then resisted in the person of Christe, our saluation, as hee deadly persecuteth dayly the ministers of the same redemption, whereof Christ was the author.

But it is to bee noted withall, that the sonne of God did willingly endure those temptations, whereof it is now entreated, and that hee strue with the Deuill as it were hand to hand, that by his victorie he might get vs the triumph. Therefore as oft as Sathan assaileth vs, let vs remember that his violence can no other way be sustained and driuen backe, then by opposing this shielde against him, as for that cause the sonne of God suffered himselfe to bee tempted, that he might stand betweene vs so oft as Sathan stirreth any exercise of temptations against vs. Therefore when hee led a priuate life at home, wee doe not reade that hee was tempted: but when hee vnderooke the office of a Redeemer, then hee in the common name of his Church came into the combat.

Then if Christ was tempted as in the publike person of all the faithfull, let vs know that these temptations which befall vnto vs, are not by fortune, or stirred at the pleasure of Sathan without the permission of God: But that the spirite of God, gouerneth these conflicts, whereby our faith is exercised, whereby is gathered a certaine hope, that God who is the cheife and great capitaine & gouernour, is not vnmindefull of vs, but that hee will helpe vs in our streights, wherein hee seeth vs ouermarched.

The wordes of Luke seeme somewhat otherwise, That Iesus full of the holy Ghost, returned from Iordan, in which wordes hee signifieth, that hee was then armed with a more plentifull grace and power of the spirit, that he might be the more strong to endure such brunts, for the spirit did not in vaine descend vpon him in a visible shape.

And it is sayde before, that the grace of GOD did the more shine outte, because that the cause of our saluation so required. The same Euangeliste and Marke, doe teach that the beginning of his temptations was sooner, for Sathan assaulted him fortie dayes also beefore his hunger: but the especiall and most notable conflicts are heere declared: that wee may knowe that Sathan beeing overcome in many conflicts, did more sharply inuade, and layde on more strongly with his whole force.

if it might be, that at length he might oppresse him that yet was inuincible For as euery man is more exercised in spirituall battailes, so much more vehemently doth God suffer him to be stricken. Wherefore let vs learne neuer to be wearied, vntill wee haue perfourmed the whole course of our warfaie, and come to the marke. But at the first sight it seemeth to bee absurde that Christ shoulde be subiect to temptations: for that menne may bee tempted, there must bee sinne and infirmitie: I answer, first that Christ had taken our infirmities, but without sinne. Then it did no more derogate from his glory that he was tempted then that he tooke vpon him our flesh. For on this condition was hee made man, that he might take vpon him our affections together with the flesh. But all the difficultie doth consist in the former clause, how Christ could be compassed about with our infirmitie, that he might be tempted of Sathan, and yet be pure and free from all sinne. But the answer shall not be hard, if we remember the whole nature of Adam, when as yet the pure image of God shined there, & yet was subiect to temptations. How many corporall affections there are in man, so many occasions of tempting them doth Sathan take. And this is worthily accounted the infirmitie of humane fleshe, to haue the senses moued with the things object: but such as was not faultie of it selfe, except that corruption had beene added, whereby it commeth to passe, that Sathan doeth neuer assault vs, but that he giueth some wound, or at least doth hurt vs with some prick. In this point the integritie of nature hath seperate Christ from vs, yet there is no meane condition to be imagined to be in him, as was in Adam, to whom it was onely giuen a possibilitie not to sinne. And we know that Christ was armed with that power of the spirit, that he could not bee peaced with the weapons of Sathan. *Then came the tempter.* The spirit of purpose doth giue this name to Sathan, that the faithfull might thereby the more diligently take heede of him Whereby we also gather that temptations which prouoke vs to euill, come not but from him. For that in Gen. 22. 3. Deut. 13. 3. God is sayd to tempt, it belongeth to another ende, that is, that he might trie their faith, or might take vengeance of the vnbeleeuers, or that hee might laye their hypocritie open, which obey nor the truth from the heart.

MAT. 3. *That these stones.* Heere also the olde writers played with weake deuises: for they say the first temptation was of gluttonie, the second of ambition, the third of couetousnesse. But it is ridiculous, if any man that is hungry desireth meate, that he might satisfie nature, to referre that to the intemperancie of the throat. Further, what dainties doe they imagine to be in bread, that he should bee accounted too delicate, that is content (as they say) with drie bread? But that wee lose no wordes in vaine, the onely answere of Christ doth sufficiently declare that Sathans purpose was otherwise: Truly the Son of GOD was not a rude and vnskilfull champion, that hee knewe not howe to auoyde the blowes of his enemy, that beeing stricken on the right side, hee should rashly hold his shield to the left. Therefore if Sathan had endeoured to driue him to the delights of gluttonie, he had the testimonies of scripture readie, wherewith he might driue him away. But he vttered none such, but taketh this sentence, men liue not by breade, but by the secrete blessing of GOD, whereby wee gather that Sathan straightway assaulted the faith of Christ,

Christ, that the same being extinguished, hee might driue Christ to vnlawfull and wicked wayes to seeke his bread. And then doth Sathan wound to death, when he attempteth to bring this to passe, that we distrusting God, should otherwise prouide for our selues, then by his word is lawfull. Therefore the meaning of the wordes is: sith thou seekest thy selfe forsaken of God, necessitie compelleth thee that thou shouldst prouide for thy selfe. Therefore get thee meate, which God prouideth not for thee. And although he pretend the diuine power of Christ, whereby those stones shoulde bee turned into bread: yet this one thing he seeketh, that Christ departing from the word of God, infidelitie should follow whatsoeuer he should say. Therefore Christe aunswereth aptly, man shall not liue by bread onely, as if he should say: thou commandest mee to seeke some remedy, whereby I might helpe my selfe otherwise then God doth permit: But this were a point of distrust, without all reason, so long as God promiseth that hee will nourish me. Thou Sathan tiest his grace to bread. But hee contrarily witnesseth, if all meates were wanting, his onely blessing sufficeth to feede vs. Now we vnderstand what kinde of temptation this was: namely that wherewith Sathan doth assault vs dayly. For the sonne of God would not subiect himsele to an vnaccustomed assault, but hee hadde fightes common with vs, that we being defended with the same armours, should not doubt but that the victorie is in our hand.

4 *It is written, man shall not liue by bread onely.* This is first woorthy to bee noted, that Christ vseth the scripture for his shielde. For this is the right maner of fighting, if wee desire to obtaine the victorie. For Paule doeth not in vaine call the word of God the spirituall sword, & armeth vs with the shield of faith. Ephe. 6. 16. 17. whereby we also gather, that the Papistes, as if they had made a covenant with Sathan, gaue ouer soules to be destroyed at his pleasure, when they maliciously suppressing the scripture, spoyled the people of God of their weapons, by the which they coulde onely defend their sauacion. They that willingly cast from them this armour, and doe not dayly exercise themselves in the schoole of God, are worthy euery moment to be slaine of Sathan, to whom they betray themselves vnarmed. And truly there is no other cause why Sathan is so weakely withstood, and that euery where hee taketh away so many, but because that God reuengeth their slouthfulnesse and contempt of his word. Now the testimonie of Moses is to bee sited, which Christ citeth. Some wrongfully wrest the same to a spirituall life, as if hee had sayde, that the soules are not nourished with visible bread, but with the worde of GOD. And that is true in it selfe: but Moses had a further respecte. Deut. 8. 3. For when they wanted breade, hee declareth that the people had Manna, an extraordinarye maner of meate: that by this instruction it might bee witnessed for euer, that the life of men is not included in bread, but to depend vpon the pleasure and good will of God. Therefore word is not heere taken for doctrine, but for a decree which God hath published for the preservation of the order of nature, & nourishing his creatures: for he casteth not men from him, when he hath made them, but on that condition he giueth them life, that hee might dayly sustayne that which hee hath once giuen.

Heb. 1. 3.

Sosayth the Apostle, all things are sustained by his mightie word: that is, the whole world is preserved, and every part of the same doth remain in his citare by his will and decree, whose power is spread in euery place both aboue and below. Therefore though wee eate bread, yet the maintenance of life is not to be attributed to the power of bread, but to the secret grace which God giueth to bread to feede vs. Whereof also followeth an other lesson, that God which now vseth bread for our nourishment, can by other meanes as oft as hee shall thinke good, prouide that we may liue. Also in this sentence of Moses their beastlines is condemned, which account of fulnes and abundance as their life. Furthermore, distrust and vngodly carefullnesse is reprobued, which driueth vs to seeke vnlawfull meanes. And to this purpose is the answere of Christ properly directed: for foode and other maintenances of this present life, we must to trust God, that none of vs passe the bounds prescribed by him. If that Christ accounted it vnlawfull, to make bread of stones besides the commandement of god: it is much lesse lawfull to get thy liuing by deceits, thefts, violence & murders

Mar. 4.

Marke 1.

Luke 4.

5. Then the deuill tooke him vp into the holy citie, & set him on a pinnacle of the temple.

6. And sayd vnto him: if thou be the Sonne of God, cast thy selfe downe: for it is written that he shall giue his Angels charge ouer thee, and with their handes they shall lift thee vp, least at any time thou shouldest dash thy foote against a stone.

7. Iesus said vnto him: It is written againe: thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

8. Againe the deuill tooke him vp into an exceeding high mountaine, & shewed him all the kingdoms of the world, & the glory of them.

9. And said vnto him: all these will I giue thee, if thou wilt fall down & worship me.

10. Then sayd Iesus vnto him, Awayde Sathan: for it is written. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, & him only shalt thou serue.

11. Then the deuill lefte him, and beheld the Angels came and worshipped him.

5. Then the Deuill tooke him vp into an high mountaine, and shewed him all the kingdoms of the world in the twinkling of an eye.

6. And the deuill sayd vnto him: all this power will I giue thee, and the glory of these kingdoms: for that is deliuered to me: & to whom soeuer I will I giue it.

7. If thou therefore wilt worship mee, they shall be all thine.

8. But Iesus answered him, and sayd. Hence from me Sathan: for it is written. Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him alone thou shalt serue.

9. Then hee brought him to Ierusalem, and set him on a pinnacle of the Temple, & sayd to him. If thou be the sonne of GOD, cast thy selfe downe from hence.

10. For it is written, that he will giue his Angels charge ouer thee to keepe thee.

11. And with their handes they shall lift thee vppe, least at any time thou shouldest dash thy foote against a stone.

12. And Iesus answered and said vnto him: It is sayd thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God.

13. And when the Deuill had ended all his temptation, hee departed from him for a season.

§ Then

13. And the Angels ministred vnto him

5. Then the deuill tooke him. It is no great matter that Luke doth rehearse that temptation in the second place, which Matthew placeth in the last place. For it was not the purpose of the Euangelistes, so to set downe the order of the history, as they would alwayes exactly obserue the poynte of time: but to gather the sum of the things, so as they might propose in a glasse or a table, those things which are most profitable to be knowne of Christ. Therefore let it suffice vs to know, that Christe was tempted 3. manner of wayes. But wiche was either the second or the third conflict, there is no cause why we should curiously seeke. In the exposition I will follow the text set downe by Matthew. It is sayd that Christ was set vpon a pinnacle of the temple. But it is demanded whether he was caried vp on high in deed, or whether it was done by a vision. Many do boldly affirme that it was a true and a real carriage of his body (as they say) for they thinke it a thing vnworthy that Christ should yeeld himselfe in danger to Sathans sleights. But this obiection is easily wiped away, that there is no absurditie in the permission of God, and voluntary subiection of Christe, so that we thinke not that he suffered any thing within, that is, in minde & soule. And that which followeth after, that all the kingdomes of the worlde were sette in the sight of Christe, and that also which Luke wryteth, that hee was caried far in the twinkling of an eye, doth rather belong to a vision, yet in a doubtful matter, & which without daunger a man may be ignorant of, I had rather suspend my iudgement, then giue the contentious occasion of quarelling. Also it may bee that the 2. temptation did not presently without distance of time followe the first, nor the third the seconde, but is more probable, that there was some distance, though by the woordes of Luke it is gathered that there was no long space betweene: for hee sayth that Christ hadde rest giuen him for a season. But this appertaineth much to the matter, to knowe what Sathan went about in this kinde of temptation, which is to bee learned by the answer of Christ, as I sayd a little before. Christ, that he might meete with the subtiltie of the enemy, and beate backe his force, holdeth out for a buckler, God is not to bee tempted. Whereby it appeareth that the deceites of the enemies tended to this purpose, that he lifting himselfe vp above measure, shoulde rashly rise vpp against God. First Sathan tryed to drawe Christ to desperation, because hee wanted meate and ordinary meanes: now hee procureth him to a vaine and proude confidence, that neglecting the meanes which were at hande, hee should throw himselfe without necessitie into manifest daunger, and as though he shoulde leape beyond his boundes. But as it becommeth vs not to despair, when we are pressed with the want of all things, but that we should depend vpon the assurance of God: so it is not lawfull for vs to set vp the combs, that wee should lift vp our selues higher then God permitteth. Now we vnderstand that the purpose of sathan was: namely, that Christe making a triall of his diuinitie, should with a foolish and a wicked rashnes rise vp against God.

6. Hee will giue his Angelles charge over thee. This malice of Sathan is to bee noted, that hee abuseth the testimony of the Scripture, that might make the life of Christ deadly, and tourne his bread to poyson. For hee ceaseth not to vse the same craft daily. And the sonne of God (who is a common exaple of al the godly) would in his own person suffer this conflict, that they

all might learne diligently to take heede to themselves, least vnder a false pretence of the scripture, they fall into the snares of Sathan. And it is not to bee doubted, but that the Lorde graunteth so much liberty to our enemy, that we should not rest in securitie, but be rather bent to keepe our watches. But let vs not be like to ouerthwart men which reiect the scripture, as if it might be tourned euery way, because that the deuill abuleth the same: so for the same cause we must abtaine from meates, least wee be poysoned. Sathan prophaneeth the worde of God, and indeuoureth to wrest the same to our destruction, but seeing it was ordayned of God for our saluation, shall the counsell of God bee to no effect, except that through our slouthfulnes, the healthful vse of the same should perih vnto vs? But this matter needeth no long disputation: only let vs see what Christ doth teach vs by his example, which wee must follow as a certaine rule. Doth he giue place to sathan, wickedly wresting the scripture? Dooth he suffer the scripture wherewith he armed himselfe before, to be shaken away or to bee taken from him? Nay by obiectiong the scripture againe, he mightily ouerthroweth the wicked caull of sathan. Therefore so oft as sathan by his subtilties pretendeth the scripture, & that vngodly men vnder this same pretence shal set vp on vs, that they might circumuent our sayth, let vs borrow weapons for the defence of our sayth, fro no other place then out of the scripture. But though this promise, (*He wil giue his Angels charge ouer thee, &c.*) doth appertaine to all the saythful, yet it especially belongeth to christ, who as he is the head of the whole Church, so in his owne right he gouerneth the angels & giueth them charge of vs. Wherefore in that, sathan doth not yet deceiue, that by this testimonie hee proueth that the angels were giuen as ministers vnto Christ, that shoulde keepe him and beare him in their handes: but the deceit is this, that he draweth the keeping of angels to a vaine and a rash course, which is then promised to the childre of God, while they keepe themselves within their bounds, & walke in his wayes. If this clause haue any force in it (*in all thy wayes*) then doth sathan maliciously corrupt and maim the saying of the Prophet, generally & confusedly wresteth the same to wandring and erroneous courses. God commandeth vs to walke in our wayes, & he sayth that his angels shall be our keepers. Sathan pretending the custodie of angels, doth exhort Christ that hee should rashly procure him danger. As if hee should haue sayde: If in spite of God thou wilt cast thy selfe to death, the Angels shall defend thy life.

7. *It is written thou shalt not tempt the Lorde.* Christ answereth most aply, it is not otherwise to bee hoped that God doeth there promise his helpe, then if the saythfull doe modestly commit themselves to him to bee gouerned: for wee cannot otherwise truit his promises, except we obey his commandements. Further, when God is tempted many wayes, yet in this place he is sayd to bee tempted, when as we neglecte his meanes which he putteth into our hand. For they which neglect the meanes which God appoynteth, do as if they tried his power and his strength: As if any should cut away the armes and handes from a man, and after bid him worke. In summe, who soeuer desireth to take a tryall of the diuine power, when as it is not necessary, he tempteth God, by bringing his promises to vniust examination.

8. *The deuill tooke him into an his mountaine.* That is to be had in memory, which

which I sayd before, that it came not to passe through the imbecillitie of the nature of Christ, that Sathan held his eyes : but by his free appoyntment and permission. Further, his senses were touched & enticed with the glory of the kingdoms which were set before him, that no inward couerousnesse mooned his mind: when as the pleasures of the flesh are caried and do carie vs as wilde beasts to those things that please vs : for Christ had the like sense that we haue, but no disordered appetites. But it was a kinde of temptation, that Christ should aske the inheritance which God promisseth to his children, of any other then of god himselfe And heere the sacrilegious boldnesse of the Deuill doth bewraye it selfe, in that he taking the government of the earth from God doth vsurpe it to himselfe. All these things (sayth he) are mine, neither can they bee obtained otherwise then at my hand. And we must dayly striue with this assault, which both all the faithfull doe feele in themselves, and is more euidently teene in the whole life of the vngodly. For though we set al our defences richesse and commodities in the blessing of God : yet our senses prouoke vs thereto, and driue vs to seeke the assistants of Sathan, as if one God were not sufficient. And a great part of the world chalenging the right and government of the earth from God, doth imagine to themselves that Sathan is the giuer of al good things. For whereof commeth it, that almost all doe addict themselves to euill Artes, and thestes, and deceits, but that they ascribe that to Sathan which was the proper tie of God, to enrich with his blessing whome hee pleaseth? They pray with mouth that God would giue them dayly bread, but with the mouth onely. For they make Sathan the cheife, in distributing the richesse of all the world.

10. *Aduide Sathan.* Luke hath for it. *Goe after mee Sathan.* Wherefore some doe stand in vaine vpon that Aduerbe, when it was sayd to Peter : *Goe behind,* Mathew 16. 23. as if Sathan himselfe heard not the same. But Christ commaundeth him simply to depart. And now he goeth forwardes in the same kinde of defence, holding forth the scripture not as a sheild of bull rushes, but as of right brasse. And hee citeth a testimonie out of the law, that one GOD is to be worshipped and serued. Also it is easily gathered, the applying and the circumstance of the place, to what ende the purpose of God belongeth, and what it profiteth. When as the Papists doe denie that onely God isto be worshipped, they shift off this place and such like with a sophisticall Comment That worship which they call *Latria*, they grant as due onely to God : but *dulia* they giue to the dead, and to their bones and their images. But this friuolous distinction of wordes being reiected, Christ doeth challenge a falling downe to worship to God alone. Whereby wee are warned to haue consideration rather of the matter, then of the word, so oft as wee haue to doe with the worshop of God. The Scripture commaundeth to worshop one God. It is to be seene to what ende. If man shall take away any thing from his glory, and giue the same to creatures, it is a sacrilegious violating of the woorshippe of GOD. And it is most euident that wee doe so, when as wee giue to creatures those good things which wee haue receiued, whereof GOD himselfe would bee acknowledged to be the onely author. But now as religion is properly spirituall, and the outwarde confession of the same appertayneth to

the body: So not onely the inward worship is due to God alone, but also the outward testimonie of the same.

11. Then the deuill left him, and behold. Luke expresseth more, namely, when he had ended all the temptation. As if hee should haue sayd that Christ had no rest nor truce giuen him, vntill he was exactly tried with all kind of temptation. He also addeth that he was onely left for a season, that wee might knowe that the rest of his life was not altogether free from temptations, but that the violence of Sathan was restrained by God, that hee should not importunately molest Christ, euen as God vseth to doe with all his. For if sometime hee permitte them to be more sharply vexed, after he releaseth them somewhat of that great conflict, that they should breathe a while, and gather vp their mindes, yet hee spareth them not, that they should nourish slouthfulnesse, but onely that they should prepare themselves to newe conflicts. That it followeth after that the Angels ministred vnto him: I account it as a comfort, that Christ should feele that God the father had a care of him, and by his mightie ayde should bee defended against Sathan. For the desert it selfe might haue increased his greife, when as he being deprived of all cōforts of men, he liued amongst wild beasts which Marke also expressely noteth. Yet it is not to be thought that Christ was at any time forsaken of the Angels: but that place might be giuen to temptation. So netime the grace of God, though it be present, yet it is hid to the senses and vnderstanding of the flesh.

Mathew. 4.

12. And when Iesus had heard that Iohn was deliuered vp, he returned into Galile.

17. Fro that time Iesus beganne to preach & say: Amend your liues, for the kingdome of heauē is at hand

Marke. 1.

14. Now after that Iohn was committed to prison, Iesus came into Galile, preaching the Gospell of the kingdome of God.

15. And saying: The time is fulfilled, and the kingdome of God is at hand: repent & beleue the Gospell.

Luke. 3.

19. But when Herod the Tetrach was rebuked of Iohn, for Herodias his brother Philips wife, & for all the euils which herod had done
20. Hee added yet this aboue all, that he shut vp Iohn in prison.

Luke. 4.

14. And Iesus returned by the power of the spirite into Galile: and there went a fame of him throughout all the region round about.
15. For he taught in their Synagogues, & was honoured of all men.

L V L E. 19. But Herod the Tetrarch. Onely Luke in this place doth shew the cause why Herod did cast Iohn into prison. Yet Mathew and Marke doe make mention of it in another place. Iosephus in the 18. booke of Antiquities sayth, because Herod feared a tumult of the people and new stirres, hee shut vp Iohn in the tower of Machærontis, because he feared the credit of the man. He sayth that Herodias was not giuen to Phillip (who ne hee affirmeth married Salome) but that she was giuen in mariage to another Herod. But because that in this matter he is taken forgetting himselfe, and also he doth not set downe the death of Phillip in his right place, therefore a more certaine troath of the historie is to be sought out of the Euangelistes, and wee must stande to their testimonie.

This is sufficiently knowne, when Herode had the daughter of Areta King of the Arabians in mariage, hee was enamored with the beautie of Herodias

Herodias his Neece, and by fraud tooke her away. And this iniury hee did to his brother Phillip without punishment: for the same Iosephus witnesseth that he was a man of a gentle and quiet disposition. Also in this history we evidently see what reward remayneth in the world for saythful & bold ministers of the truth, especially where they reprove sinnes. For scarce the hundred man doth admit correction: therefore if they be seuerely touched, they runne forth into madnes. If this pride be found in the most of the common people: no maruell if tyrants doe more sharply rage against them that reprove them, to whom nothing is more bitter then to be brought into order. Again, in Iohn there shineth a notable example of constancie, wherewith it becometh all godly teachers to be endued: that they shoulde not doubt to prouoke against them great and mighty men, as oft as necessitie shall so require. For he serueth not God sincerely, that maketh acception of persons. Further, when Luke sayth that this euill was added aboue all the rest: Hee meaneth that his malice was then past hope, and that the sinner is then come to the highest step, when as he is angry with the remedies: and doth not onely refuse correction, but also taketh vengeance vpon him that admonisheth him, as vpon his enemy.

M A T. 12. *When Iesus had heard.* The history of Iohn seemeth not to agree with these, who witnesseth that Iohn and Christ began the office of teaching both at one time. But it is to be noted that our three Euangelistes do therefore in silence passe ouer that short time, because the course of Iohn was not yet finished, that is the preparation to receiue the Gospell of Christe. And certainly, though Christ within that time executed the office of a teacher, yet he properly began not the preaching of the Gospell, vntill he succeeded Iohn. Wherefore it is no absurditie that the three Euangelistes doe graunt and assigne that time to the ministerie of Iohn, wherein Christ gathered his disciples, as if they should say: the morning passing, the sunne arose. But that speech is to be noted which Luke hath, that Iesus in the power, or by the power of the spirit, came into Galile, for it is to great purpose that we do not imagine any earthly or humane thing in Christ, but that the celestiall and diuine power in him may come into our minde, and occupie our senses.

M A R K E. 14. *Preaching the Gospell of the kingdome of God.* Matthew seemeth to haue somewhat differing from the other two. For hee sayth that after Christ went into Capernaum, & had left his country Nazareth, then at length he beganne his preaching: But Luke and Marke doe say that he taught openly in the country. But the answer is easie: For the Aduerte of time in Matthew ought not onely to be referred to the next clause, but to the whole course of the history. Therefore at his coming into Galile, Christe entred his course. Also the summe of the doctrine as it is deliuered by Matthew, differeth nothing from that which a little before we read, that Iohn vsed. For it consisteth of two partes, repentance and the preaching of grace and saluation. Hee exhorteth the Iewes to conversion, because the kingdom of God is at hand, that is, because God will take his people into his hand to gouerne them, which is the full and perfect felicitie.

Marke speaketh a little otherwise. *The kingdome of God is at hand: Repent and beleue the Gospell: yet in the same sense: for hauing spoken before*

of restoring the kingdome of God amongst the Iewes, hee exhorteth to repentance and fayth. Yet it may be demanded, sith repentance doth depend on the Gospell, why Marke seperateth the same from the doctrine of the Gospell. It may bee answered two wayes. For God sometime so called vs to repentance, so that hee onely commaundeth that the life be changed to better. Afterwardes he sheweth that connerlion and newnesse of life, is the gifte of his spirit, that we may know that we are not onely commaunded that which is our dutie, but that there is together offered the grace and power of obedience. If after this manner we take this which Iohn preached of repentance, the meaning shall bee: the Lorde commaundeth you to turne to him: but because yee cannot doe it by your owne industry, he promisseth the spirit of regeneration. Wherefore it becometh you to embrace this grace by fayth: though the fayth which he requireth to bee had in the Gospell, ought not to bee restrayned to the gift of renouation, But it belongeth especially to the forgiveness of sinnes. For Iohn ioyneth repentance with fayth: because God doth therefore reconcile himselfe to vs, that as a father he may be worshipped of vs in holinesse and righteousness. Furthermore, there is no absurditie if wee say that to beleue the Gospel, doth signifie as much as to embrace free righteousness. For this special relation betweene fayth and remission of sinnes, is often found in the Scripture: as when he teacheth that we are iustified by fayth. This place may be expounded both wayes, yet let that principle remayne vnshaken, that free saluation is offered vs of God, that being conuerted to him, we should liue to righteousness. Therefore hee promising vs mercy, doth call vs to the deniall of the flesh. The Epytheton is to bee noted wherewith Marke adorneth the Gospel: For hereby we learne, that by the preaching of the same, the kingdome of God is erected and established vpon the earth, neyther doth God raigne by any other meanes amongst men, Whereby it also appeareth how miserable the condition of men is without the Gospell.

LVKE. 15. *He was honoured of all men.* This is namely set downe by Luke, that we might knowe that the diuine power did presently from the beginning shine in Christe, which driue men not as yet infected with a malicious desire of gainesaying, into admiration of him.

Luke. 4.

Matthew

Marke,

16. *And hee came to Nazareth where hee had bene brought vpp, (and as his custome was) went into the Synagogue on the Sabbath day, and stood vpon to reade.*

17. *And there was deliuered vnto him the booke of the Prophet Esaias, and when hee had opened the booke, he found the place where it was written,*

18. *The spirit of the Lorde is vpon me, because he hath anoynted me, that I should preach the Gospell to the poore: hee hath sent mee, that I should heale the broken hearted, that I should preach deliverance to the captiues, & recovering of sight to the blind, that I should set at liberty them that are bruised*

19. *And*

19. And thus I should preach the acceptable yeere of the Lord.

20. And hee closed vppe the booke, and gaue it againe to the minister, and sate downe: and the eyes of all that were in the Synagogue were fastned on him.

21. Then hee began to say vnto them, This day is the scripture fulfilled in your eares.

22. And all bare witness, and wondred at the gracious wordes, which proceeded out of his mouth: & sayd, is not this Iosephes sonne?

16. He came to Nazareth. The Euangelistes doe stand vpon this one thing, that they might shew by what meanes Christ was made known, for which purpose Luke here reporteth a thing worthy to be remembered: that is, that he expounding the place of Iſaiah, and applying it to the present vse, hee turned the eyes of all men vpon himselfe. When he saith that he came into the Synagogue, according to the custome: wee hereby gather that hee did not only speake to the people in the streetes and high wayes, but as much as hee might, he obserued the vsuall order of the Church. Also we see wthall, though the Iewes were degenerate, yet in such confusion of thinges, and in the state of the Church miserably corrupted, this good thing remayned, that they read the scripture before the people, that thereby they might take occasion of teaching and exhorting. Whereby it also appeareth what was the right and lawfull manner of keeping the Sabbath For God did not therefore command his people to keepe holy dayes, as though that he was simply pleased with their rest: but rather that he might exercise them in meditating his workes. Also because the mindes of men are dim in considering the workes of God, it is necessary that they should be directed by the rule of the scripture: but though Paul numbred the Sabbath amongst the shadowes of the law, Colloſſ. 2. 17. Yet in this poynt we haue like cause to obserue it, as the Iewes hadde, that the people may come together, to heare the word, to publike prayers, & to other exercises of godlinesse: for the which cause the Lords day came in place of the Iewish Sabbath. Now, if the times be cōpared, it shal easily appeare out of this present place, that the corruptions of the popish hierarchy are at this day more filthy & more deformed, then they were amongst the Iewes vnder Annas & Cayphas. For the reading of the scripture, which thē was vsed, was not only vnder the pope grown out of vse, but with sword & fire was driuen out of the churches. But that which they song in an vnknown tongue, as it seemed in mockery. Christ rose vp to read, not only that his voyce might bee the better heard, but in signe of reuerence. For this doth the maiesty of the scripture deserue, that the interpreters of it shoulde professe themselues to come modestly and reuerently to handle the same.

17. Hee founde the place. It is not to bee doubted but that Christe of purpose chose this place. Some thinke that it was euen offered to him by GOD: but sith hee had graunted him a free election, I do rathe referre it to his iudgement, that hee chose this place before others. Also Iſaiah pro-

miseth in that place, that after the captiuitie of Babylon there shoulde yet bee some witnessies of the fauour of God, which should gather the people from destruction, and out of the darkenesse of death, and should with a spirituall power restore the Church afflicted with so many calamities. But because that redemption was to be proclaymed in the name & authoritie of Christ alone: therefore he speaketh in the singular number, and after a sort taketh vpon him the person of Christe, that he might the more effectually stirre vp the mindes of the godly to an assured trust. It is certaine that the words which are here set downe cannot properly be applyed to any, but to Christe alone, and that for two causes. First, because that hee alone was endued with the fulnes of the spirite, that hee might be a witnessie and a messenger of our reconciliation with God (by which reason Paul assigneth that peculiarly to him, which is common to all the ministers of the Gospell, Ephe. 2. 17. that is, that they should preach peace to as many as are nigh and a farre off:) then because he onely worketh and performeth by the power of his spirit, whatsoeuer good things are promised.

18. *The spirit of the Lorde vpon mee.* This is therefore sayde that wee might know that Christ aswell in himselfe, as in his ministers doth not the worke of man, or any priuate busines, but that he was sent of God to restore the saluation of the Church. For he testifieth that he doth nothing by the motion & counsell of man, but all things by the gouernement of the spirite, that the sayth of the godly might bee grounded vpon the authoritie and power of God. That clause that next followeth, *Because he hath annoynted me*, is added to expound the former. For many doe falsly boast that they haue the spirit of God, when they are without the gift of the spirite. But Christ by the annoynting, as by the effect proueth that hee is endued with the spirite of God. Then he sheweth to what end he was endued with the grace of the spirite: namely, that hee might preach to the poore: whereby we gather, that whosoever are sent of GOD to preach the Gospell, ought first to bee endued with necessary giftes, that they may be able to discharge so great an office. Wherefore they are in deed to bee laughed at, which vnder the pretence of the calling of God, doe vsurpe the place of Pastors, when they are most vnapt to execute the office: as the horned bishopes in popery, when they are more ignorant then any Asses, yet they proudly cry out, that they are the Vicars of Christ, and that they onely are the lawfull gouernours of the Church. It is also expiessly sayd, that the Lord doth annoynt his seruantes: because that the true & effectuell preaching of the Gospell doth not consist in windy eloquence, but in the celestiall power of the spirite: as Paul sayth. 1. Cor. 2. 1. & 4.

To the poore. The Prophet declareth what the estate of the Church was before the beginning of the Gospell, and what all our condition is without Christe. Therefore hee calleth them poore, broken, captiues, and blind, and brused, to whome God promiteth restitution. But though the body of the people was oppressed with so many miseries, that these titles might agree to euery member of the same: yet because that many in their pueritie, blindness, bondage, and to bee shorte, in death, doe flatter themselves, or are senselesse: therefore fewe are fit for the receiuing of this grace. And first we are taught here, to what end the preaching of the Gospell belon-

belongeth, and what it bringeth vs : that is, when we were wholly ouerwhelmed with all kind of euils, there God shineth vnto vs with his light of life, that hee leading vs out of the great depth of death, might restore vs into a full felicity. Truly this is no vsuall commendation of the Gospell, that wee gather such incomparable fruit of it. Secondly wee see whome Christ calleth to him, and whom hee maketh partakers of the grace committed to him : that is, they that are wretches in all pointes, and are without all hope of saluation. But againe we are admonished, that we cannot any otherwise inioy these benefites of Christ, except we be humbled with a deepe feeling of our miseries: and as people hungerstarued, doe desire and seeke for him to be our deliuerer: for who soeuer swell in pride, and sigh not vnder their captiuitie, and are not displeased with their owne blindness, they doe with deafe eares despise this prophesie.

19. *That I should preach the acceptable yeare.* It seemeth to many to be an allusion to the yeare of Iubile, whose iudgement I doe not censure. Yet it is worth the labour to note, how the Prophet taketh paines to answer a doubt, which might trouble and shake the weake mndes, seeing that the Lord had so long differred the promised saluation, & had holden them in suspence. Therefore he appointeth the time of redemption in the counsell or good will of god, as he saith, chap. 49. 8. In an acceptable time I haue heard thee, in a day of saluation haue I helped thee. Paul to the Gal 4. 4. calleth it the fulnesse of time: that the faithfull may learn not curiously to enquire further then is expediēt but to rest in the will of God: and this one thing was sufficient for them, that the saluation in Christ was giuen, when God saw it good.

20. *And the eyes of all that were in the Synagogue.* I doubt not but that God had touched their hearts, that the strangenes of the matter might make them more attentue, and to should giue eare to Christ speaking: for it was necessary that they should bee stayde, least they presently should haue made a noyse, or at the least that they should not breake off the course of the word, seeing that otherwise they were more bent and readie to contemne Christ, as we shall see.

21. *This day is fulfilled.* Christ doth not onely vse these three words: but proueth in deede that the time is now come, wherein God would restore the decayed Church, that the exposition of the prophesie, might be euident and plaine to the hearers, as the interpreters doe rightly and in order handle the scripture, when they apply the same to the present vse: and hee sayth, that it was fulfilled rather in their eares then in their eyes: because the bare sight doth little profit, except that doctrine had the cheife place.

22. *They bare witnesse.* Heere Luke first commendeth vnto vs the diuine grace which was in the mouth of CHRIST: then hee liuely payneth out the vnthankfulnesse of men. Hee calleth them the wordes of grace, or gracious wordes in the Hebrew phrase, wherein the power and grace of the holy Ghost was seene. Therefore the Nazarites are compelled to acknowledge with admiration, GOD speaking in Christ: yet they willingly hinder themselues from giuing the right and due honour to the heauenly doctrine. For when they object that hee is the sonne of Ioseph, they doe not amplifie with this circumstance the glory of GOD, as it became them.

but

but maliciously they take this as an offence, that they might with the fairer colour refuse whatsoeuer shalbe said by the sonne of Ioseph. So at this day we see very many, who though they are enforced to grant that to be the word of god, which they heare: yet they get them friuolous excuses, wherewith they may exempt themselues from the necessitie of obedience.

And truly the cause why we are not so touched with the power of the Gospell, as it were meete, commeth not by any other meanes, but that we are alet vnto our selues, and with our malice wee choake the light, by beholding whercof, wee are moued whether we will or no.

Luke. 2.

23. Then he sayd vnto them, you will surely say to mee this prouerbe, Physition heale thy selfe: whatsoeuer we haue heard done in Capernaum, doe it here likewise in thine owne country

24. And he sayd, verily I say vnto you, no prophet is accepted in his country.

25. But I tell you of a troath, many widowes were in Israel in the dayes of Elias, when heauen was shut 3. yeares and sixe moneths, when great famine was throughout all the land:

26. But vnto none of them was Elias sent, saue vnto Sarepta, a citie of Sydon, vnto a certaine widow.

27. Also there were many lepers in Israell, in the time of Elisens the Prophet: yet none of them were made cleane, sauing Naaman the Syrian.

28. Then all that were in the Synagogue, when they heard it, were filled with wrath.

29. And rose vp, and thrust him out of the cistie, and lead him vnto the edge of the hill, whereon their citie, was built, to cast him downe headlong.

30. But he passed through the midst of them, and went his way.

23. *Physition heale thy selfe.* By the wordes of Christ it is easily gathered, that he was contemptuously receiued by the Nazarites: for hee vttereth that, which he knew they thought in their minds. Then he laieth the fault vpon the, why he stayeth from working miracles amongst them: and he reproveth their malice, because they gaue no reuerence to the Prophet of God. The obiection which he preuenteth is this. It is no maruell, if his countri-men haue him in no estimation, seeing that he doth not ennoble his owne country, with miracles, as he doth strang places: therefore this is a iust reuenge, if hee be reiected of his, which hee lesse esteemeth then any other. To this purpose belongeth the common prouerbe, that a Physition should begin first with himselfe and his owne people, before hee shewe his skill of curing to strangers, The summe of

of the obiection is, Christ did preposterously, for that with his myracle he renowned other Cities of Galile, and had no respect to his owne country. And this seemed to the Nazarites to be an honest excuse, why they againe might refuse him.

24. *Verily, I say vnto you.* He layeth to their charge that it is through their owne fault, that hee sheweth not his power in myracles amongst them, as in other places. For the incredulitie of men, stayeth God that hee worke not for their saluation, as were to be wished. Matth. 13. 58. and Mar. 6. 5. Therefore could not Christ do myracles amongst them, because they beleueed not in him: not that it is in the will of men to tie the handes of God. but because he depriveth them of the fruite of his workes, which through infidelity make theselues vnworthy. Therefore the answere is as much, as if Christ shoulde haue sayde: If you will be pertakers of myracles, why doe not you giue place to God? Nay, why doe you proudly reiect the minister of his power? Therefore you haue a iust reward of your contempt, that you beeing passed by, I shoulde rather shew my myracles in other places, that I am the Messias of God, to whome the restoring of the Church is committed. And truly that vnthankfulnesse might not be borne, that when God would haue his sonne brought vp in their city, that they should despise such a nourse. Wherefore of right hee withdrew his hand from thence, that it should not be scorned by so wicked contemners. But here wee learne how much the Lorde esteemeth his worde for that hee may punish the contempt of the same, he taketh from amongst them the graces, which are testimonies of his presence. For the vnderstanding of this sentence, *That a Prophet is not esteemed in his owne country.* Let the readers looke what wee haue sayde in the fourth Chapter of Iohn about the end.

25. *There were many widowes.* After that Christ had layd the fault vpon them, that they were without myracles, he now proueth by two exâples, that it should not seeme absurde, if God should preferre straungers before his own household people: and they ought not to lay the fault vpon him, if that he obeyed the calling of God, as Elyas and Eliseus did in times past. And sharply he restrayneth their vaine confidence, that they would haue him bound to them, because he was brought vpe amongst them. At what time (sayth he) the famine continued for two yeares and a halfe, there were many widowes in the land of Israel: whose neede the Prophet was not commaunded to helpe, but hee was sent to a stranger of the City of Sydon. Likewise Eliseus cured none of the Lepers of his owne country, but Naaman, that man of Syria. And though he peculiarly nypeth the Nazarites: yet hee also reprooueth the vnthankfulnes. of all the nation, for that almost all were wont so much the more vnworthily to despise the Lord, by how much he came neere to them. For how came it to passe, that God preferred the strange woman before all the Israelites: but because that the Prophet being thrown forth of the, was enforced to seeke entertainment in a prophane land? And wherefore would God that Naaman the Syria should be healed by Eliseus, but for the reprove of the people of Israe? Therefore the meaning is, that it now falleth out, as it did in times past, that God will send his power a farre offe vnto strangers, because he is driuen backe by them, that dwell at home with him. Yet Christe declareth that nothing of his glory:

glory is diminished, in that hee is nought set by of his country men : because that God, to their ignominie and shame, can other where honour and exalt his sonne, as in times past hee honoured his Prophets in the midst of the Gentiles. In this manner the foolish glorying of flesh is beaten downe, when wee see the Lord raigne not only where and when he wil: but euen in the vttermost corners, not regarding the land which hee had chosen for a dwelling place for himselfe. Also here is a generall doctrine to bee gathered, that it becometh not vs to prescribe God a lawe for the bestowing of his benefits, but that at his pleasure hee may rayle the lowe and the most contemned menne, to honour, the chiefe being reiected. Neither is it lawfull for vs to stirre, if he altogether ouerthrow that order that pleaseth our iudgemēt. And the Antithesis between Israel and the prophane nations must be noted. But it behooueth vs alwayes to consider this, that hee chooseth none before other for their owne worthinesse: but that rather commeth by the wonderfull counsell of God. Yet though the reason be hidden, it is necessary to honour and worship the depth.

28. *They were filled with wrath.* They vnderstoode to what purpose those two examples tended, which Christe alleadged: that is, that the grace of God should bee transferred to a place. Therefore they tooke it for their reproach. But whereas their consciences ought to be touched to the quick that their faults being corrected, they might seeke remedie, they are onely driuen into a madnesse. So the wicked do not onely stibbornly resist the iudgements of GOD, but they cruelly rise against his seruants. Hereby it appeareth what force these reproofes haue, which come frō the spirit of God: for they enflame their mindes with madnesse, that willingly do scorne the same.

Further, when wee see the mindes of men to bee so full of poyson, that they waxe madde against God, so soone as they are sharply handled, we must aske the spirite of meekenesse, that the same fury carry not vs into this deadly battyle. When Luke sayth that Christe went thorow the midst of them, and so escaped their handes, he declareth that he was deliuered by God not without a great myracle from the present death. By which example wee are taught, although our aduersaries preuaile, that our life seeme to bee at their pleasure: yet the power of God shall alwayes be the conquerer, to preserue vs so long as hee will keepe vs in this world, either he will bind their handes, or strike their eyes with blindness, or amaze their heates and mindes.

Matth. 4

13. *And leauing Nazareth, went and dwelt in Capernaum, which is neere the sea, in the borders of Zabulon, and Nephtalim,*

14. *That it might bee fulfilled which was spoken by Isaias, the Prophet saying:*

15. *The land of Zabulon, and the land of Nephtalim by the way of the sea, beyond Iordan, Galile of the Gentiles:*

16. *The people which sat in darknesse, sawe*
great

Marke.

Luke.

great light, and to them that sate in the region and shadow of death, light is risen vp.

13 And leaving Nazareth. I haue thought good therefore to adde this place of Mathew to the historie of Luke, because it may be gathered, that Christ to this time was accustomed to frequent the citie of Nazareth: hee bidding that citie farewell, that he might auoyd danger, hee went to Capernaum, and the cities thereabouts. This history hath no difficultie, but that Mathew seemeth to abuse the testimony of the prophet into an other sense. But if wee weigh the naturall sense of the Prophet, the applying of it to this present cause, shall be apt and easie. For Esayas, after he had spoken of the most greivous calamitie of the people, that he might comfort them in sorrow, promitteth, when the people shall be brought to the lowest ebbe, presently deliuerance shall follow, which, darkenes being shaken off, shall restore the light of life. The wordes are, the darknesse shall not be according to the affliction,, that it had, when at the first he touched lightly the land of Zabulon, & the land of Nephtali, nor afterward when he was more greivous by the way of the sea, beyond Iordan in Galile of the Gentiles. The people that walked in darknes, haue scene a great light. The Israchites were now oppressed with a double calamitie: for, first foure tribes or thereabouts were lead into captiuitie by *Theglath Peleser*. Then when Salmansar strooke all the kingdome of Israell, there remained a third plague: which the Prophet about the end of the eight chapter saith, shalbe the sharpest of all. But now in the words, which we haue rehearsed, there followeth a mitigation: because God reacheth his hand to his people, death shall be easier to be borne then sicknesses were before. Although (saith he) the whole people shall be blot- ted out, yet the shining light of grace shall bring to passe, that there shalbe lesse darknes in this latter destruction, then was in the double destruction of the ten tribes. Also I doubt not but that the promise ought to be extended to the whole body of the people, which in shewe seemed to bee in like miserable and lamentable estate. For the Iewes doe preposterously apply the same to the deliuerance of the citie of Ierusalem: as if the light of life had beene rettored, whē by the sight of king Sennacherib the siege was rayfed. Certaynely, it doeth plainly appeare by the text, that the Prophet had a further regard. Therefore, when he shall promise a generall restitution of all the Church, it followeth that the land of Zabulon, and all the land of Nephtalim, and Galile of the Gentiles: whre cōprehended in the number of them, whose darknes of death were changed into the light of life. The returne of the people from Babylon was the beginning of this light, and as the morning. At the length the sunne of righteousness Christ, came forth in his full brightnes, and by his comming hee v- terly abolished the darknes of death. Therefore Paul to the Eph. 5. 14. ad- monisheth that in him was fulfilled, that which euery wher is found in the pro- phets: Awake thou that sleepest, and stand vp from the dead. Now when wee know that the kingdome of Christ is spirituall, it is necessary that the light of saluation, which he bringeth, and what helpe focuer we receiue frō him, should be agreeable to the nature of the same. Whereof it followeth that our soules are drowned in the darknes of eternall death, vntill he lighten them with his grace

Esay 9. 1.

2. Ki. 15. 26

& 18. 9

The

The Prophet speaketh of the ouerthrowing of a countrie : but the condition of mankinde is described as in a glasse, vntill it be set at libertie by the grace of Christ. That they that sate in darkenesse are sayd to see a great light : so to den and so notable a change doth amplifie the greatnes of the diuine saluation. The lower Galile was called Galile of the Gentiles, not onely because it was so neare to Tyre and Sydon, but becafe the Gentiles were there mingled amongst the Iewes : especially for that Dauid had granted certaine cities to king Hiram.

Mat. 4.

18. And Iesus walking by the sea of Galile, saw two brethren, Simon, which was called Peter, & Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

19. And hee sayd vnto them, follow me, and I will make you fishers of men.

20. And they straight way leauing the net, followed him.

21. And when hee was gone forth from thence, hee sawe other two brethren, Iames the sonne of Zebedeus, and Iohn his brother in a shippe with Zebedeus their father, mending their nets, and he called them.

22. And they without saying, leauing the ship & their father, followed him.

23. So Iesus went about all Galile, teaching in their Synagogue, and preaching the Gospell of the kingdome, and healing euery sicknes & euery disease among the people.

24. And his fame spread abroad through all Syria, & they brought vnto him all sicke people, that were taken with diuers diseases & grippings, & the that were possessed

Marke 1.

16. And as he walked by the sea of Galile, he saw Simon, and Andrew his brother, casting a net into the sea: for they were fishers.

17. Then Iesus said vnto them, follow mee, and I will make you fishers of men.

18. And straightway they forsooke their nets: and followed him.

19. And when hee had gone a little further thence, hee sawe Iames the sonne of Zebedeus, & Iohn his brother, as they were in the shippe, mending their nets.

20. And anon hee called them: and they left their father Zebedeus in the shippe with his hyred seruants, & went their way after him.

Luke 5.

1. Then it came to passe, as the people pressed vpon him, to heare the word of God, that he stood by the lake of Genazareth.

2. And saw two ships standing by the lake side, but the fishermen were gone out of them, and were washing ther nets.

3. And hee entred into one of the ships, which was Simons, and required of him, that hee would thrust off a little from the land, and hee sate downe, and taught the people out of the ship.

4. Now, when hee had left speaking, hee sayde vnto Simon, launch out into the deepe, & let downe your nettes, to make a draught.

5. Then Simon answered & sayd vnto him: maister, we haue trauelled all night, and haue taken nothing: neuerthelesse at thy word I will let downe the net.

6. And when they had so done, they enclosed a great multitude of fishes, so that their net brake.

7. And, they beckned to their partners, which were in the other ship, that they should come, and helpe them: who came then, and filled both the ships, that they did sinke.

8. Now when Simon Peter saw it, hee fell downe at Iesus knees, saying, Lord, goe from me: for I am a sinfull man.

sed with deuils, and these which were Lunatike, and those that had the palseie: and hee healed them.

25. And there followed him great multitudes out of Galile, and Decapolis, and Ierusalem, & Iudaea, and from beyonde Iordau.

9 For hee was utterly astonished, and all that were with him: for the draught of fishes which they tooke

10. And so was also Iames & Iohn, the sonnes of Zebedeus, which were companions with Simon. Then Iesus sayd vnto Simon: Feare not, from hence soorth thou shalt catch men.

11. And when they had brought the ships to land, they forsooke all, and followed him.

MAT. 18. And he walking. Because this historie is set downe by Luke after two miracles, which wee shall see afterward, it was commonly thought that the miracle which is reported was wrought by him somewhat after they were called by Christ. But the reason which they follow hath but small force: for it was not the purpose of the Euangelists to write Chronicles from yeare to yeare in a certaine and distinct order of times: whereby it came to passe, that the order of dayes being not regarded, they accounted it sufficient to gather summarily the cheifest of the deedes of Christ: yet they kept an account of the yeares, that it might be euident to the readers how Christ bestowed the course of three yeares from the beginning of his preaching, vnto his death. But those miracles, which were wrought at that time, they set down at libertie, as hereafter by many examples shall more plainely appeare.

But now it appeareth by many arguments, that this historie is reported by the three: of the which yet this one may suffice the reader that is not contentious, that the three with one consent doe teach, that Peter & Andrew, Iames and Iohn, were created Apostles. If they had bene called before, it shoulde follow that they had bene Apostats, that forsaking their maister, and despising their calling, had returned to their olde maner of life. This is the onely difference betwene Luke and the other two that hee onely rehearseth the miracle, which the other doe omit. But this is not vnusuall amongst the Euangelists, to touch one part of a historie, omitting many circumstances. Where o^r there is no absurditie, it wee say that one miracle is left out by two, which is reported by one. And that is to be remembred that Iohn sayth, 20. 31. that of innumerable miracles of Christ, there were some chosen, which might suffice for the prouing of his diuine power, and for the confirming of our faith in him. Therefore it is no maruaile, if Matthew and Marke doe briefly touch the calling of the foure Apostles, whose circumstance Luke doeth more at large set forth.

LVKE. 1. Hee stood by the lake. Matthew and Marke call it the sea of Galile, after the olde manner of their tongue. The lake in times past among the Hebrewes was properly called *sinait*. Then the language being corrupted,

corrupted, the word was turned into Genezareth. The prophane writers doe call it Genesar: on that part that bordered vppon Galile, they called it the sea of Galile. The banke that was neere to Tiberias, was named after that citie. In another place there will be a more fitte occasion to speake of the largenesse and situation of the same. Now we will come to the matter it selfe. Luke saith that Christ going vp into Peters ship, launched out a litle from the land, that he might the more commodiously teach the people from thence, which were come out of diuers places, for the desire they had to heare him: and when hee had ended his teaching, by a miracle hee shewed a token of his diuine power: for though it is vsuall to fishers to make many draughtes in vaine, and then with one good draught to recompence the labour that they had spent in vaine: yet the miracle was set forth by this circumstance, that when they had taken nothing all the night (which yet is most fit for catching) suddenly a great multitude of fishes was heaped into their nets, which filled their ships. Therefore Peter and his fellowes doe easily acknowledge, that such a pray, as exceeded measure, came not to them by chaunce, but was giuen them of God.

L V. 5. *Maister, we haue trauailed all night.* It is not to be doubted but that Peter knowing that Christ executed the office of a teacher, and touched with a reuerence of him, did so call him: yet he had not so profited, as hee deserued to bee accounted amongst his disciples. For it is not enough to thinke reuerently of Christ, except we embracing his doctrine with obedience of faith, doe hold that which he requireth of vs. And though hee had no taste, or very small taste of the Gospell: yet he sheweth how much he attributeth to Christ, whereas being wearied with labour, without profit, that which he in vaine had tried, he againe attempted. Therefore it cannot be denied, but that Christ was great, and that his authoritie much preuayled with him. But this particular faith had in one onely commandement of Christ, and that in a priuate earthly busines, had not made Peter a Christian, nor giuen him place amongst the children of God: but that from this beginning of obedience, he should at length be lead to a full obedience. But sith that Peter was so ready to obey the commandement of Christ, whom as yet he did not know eyther to bee a Prophet, or the Sonne of God. No excuse can serue our slouth, that being taught that he is our Lord, and king, and iudge, and being tenne times commanded by him to doe our dutie, doe not yet stirre a finger.

L V. 6. *They enclosed a great multitude of fishes.* The end of the miracle was, that the deitie of Christ being knowne, Peter and others should yeeld themselves to be his disciples. Yet generally by this example wee are taught not to feare that the blessing of God and happie successe shall not follow our labor, as oft as at the commaundement and direction of Christ wee lay our hands to worke: But there was such a plentie of fishes as sanke the shippes, and astonished the mindes of them that beheld it. For it was meete that the diuine glory of Christ should be reuealed by this miracle, that the credite might bee wholly his.

I V. 8. *Lorde goe from mee.* Though menne in their daily prayers doe desire the presence of God: yet it is necessary that as soone as G O D appeareth, that they shoulde bee affrayde, and halfe dead with feare and amasednesse, vntill hee giue them comfort. There is good cause why they should so earnestly pray for the presence of God: for hee being absent, they are enforced to feelee themselves to be miserable wretches: and his presence is therefore fearefull, because they then beginne to feelee that they are nothing: nay, with what a heape of euils they are filled. After this manner Peter so reuerenceth Christ in this myracle, that he being amazed with his maiestie, woulde flee as much as he could. And this did not onely befall to Peter, but as by the texte we do gather, they were all affrayd. Wherefore wee see that this feelug is planted in all men, that they should be affrayd at the presence of God. And it is profitable for vs, that what foolish boldnesse or pride soeuer is in vs might be humbled, so there shall presently be giuen comfort, which may holde vs vp. Therefore Christ with a sweete and friendly answer doth recreate the mind of Peter, and forbiddeth him to feare. So the Lord buryeth his in a graue, that then he may giue them life.

L V. 10. *From henceforth thou shalt catch men.* Matthew sayth, *I will make you fishers of men.* But Marke hath, *I will make you to be fishers.* By which wordes wee are taught, that Peter and the other three were not only chosen of Christ to be disciples, but created Apostles, or at the least chosen in hope of Apostleshippe. Therefore here is not onely described a generall calling to the sayth, but a speciall calling to a certaine office.

I graunt that the office of teaching was not yet committed vnto them: but yet Christ calleth and chuseth them into his company, that hee might frame them to teaching. And this is wisely to be considered: for all are not commaunded to leaue their parentes and their old trade of liuing, that they may follow Christe on foote: but the Lorde is content to haue some in his flocke and Church, and to others he appoynteth a proper standing. Therefore let them that haue the office of a publike person layd vpon them, know, that there is more to be required of them then of any priuate persons. So Christ chaunging nothing in the common life of others, dooth bring these foure from their worke, whereby they liued before, that he might vse their helpe in a more notable office.

Also Christ chose vnto him grosse Idiores no lesse rude in witte, then voyde of learning, that he might frame them, nay, that he might renew them with the grace of his spirit, that they might excell all the wisemen of the world. For so it was his will to pull down the pride of flesh, & to giue a notable token of spiritual grace in them, that wee might learne to aske the light of sayth from heauen, knowing that it cannot be obtained by our owne industrie..

Furthermore, that he chose not the vnlearned and rude, that hee woulde leaue them alwayes such: that which he did, may not be drawne into example: as if at this day also such Pastors were to be ordayned, as are after to be instructed to execute their office. For wee know what rule hee prescribeth vs by the mouth of Paul: that is, that none may be called, except they bee apt to teach. *Tim. 3. 11*

And hee did not chuse such, as if he preferred ignorance before knowledge: as some frantike men doe triumph to themselves in their owne ignorance, and how much more they abhorre learning, so much the nearer they thinke themselves to the Apostles. And his will was at the first to chuse these base men, that he might overthrow the vanitie of them, that thinke that the vnlearned shall not enter into heauen. But after they ioyned Paule as a companion to these fishers: who from his youth was diligently trayned vpp in learning, Act. 22. 3. But yet it pertayneth nothing to the matter, to dispute more subtilly of the maner of the metaphor: for that it was taken of the present matter: yet when Christ spake of the preaching of the Gospell, he aptly alluded to fishing: because that men wandering, and scattered abroad in the worlde, as in a vatt and confused sea, are gathered together by the preaching of the Gospell. But the history which is recorded in the first Chapter of Iohn differeth from this. For when Andrew was one of Iohns disciples, hee was by him deliuered to Christ, and after he brought his brother with him, and then they tooke him as their master: but after they were receiued into a higher office.

MAT. 22. *And they without taryng.* Heere first appeareth the force of Christs voyce, not that the onely voyce of Christ doth so effectually perce in to the heartes of men: but because the Lord by his spirit doth inwardly driue all them, that he will draw and pull to himselfe, that they may obey his voyce. Secondly, the aptnes to be taught, and the readinesse to obey, is prayesed in the disciples, which preferre the calling of Christ before all the busines of the world. Especially it becommeth the ministers of the word to marke this example, that all other cares being set by, they may addict and giue themselves wholly to the Church, whereto they are appointed.

MAT. 23. *Iesus went about all Galile.* Matthew reportes the same things againe in an other place. But there is no inconuenience, seeing Christ for a time ceased not daily to worke almost innumerable myracles, that generally the course of the same is twise or thrise mentioned. Nowe in the wordes of Matthew first it is to bee noted, that Christ neuer rested, that he might spread the seede of the Gospell euery where. Also Matthew calleth it the Gospell of the kingdome: whereby the kingdome of God is established amongst men, for their saluation. Therefore hee maketh difference betwene the perfect & eternall beatitude, and the prosperous and pleasant things of this present life. That Matthew sayeth that Christe healed all diseases, the meaning is, of what kind neuer they were. For it is certaine, that all were not healed of their diseases, but there were no kind of diseases that were offered him, that hee healed not. And he reckonech the chiefe kinde of diseases, wherein Christe shewed his power. The scripture saith not all generally, that were vexed of the deuill men possessed with diuelles: but those that with a secret vengeance of God are deliuered bound to Sathan, that he might possesse their mindes and senses. They are called Lunatiques, in whome the force of the disease increaseth or decreaseth; after the inclination of the moone, as they thinke they are sicke of the falling sicknes, and such like: when we know that such diseases are not curable by naturall remedies, it followeth that the deitie of Christ is here witnessed, such that hee cured them wonderfully.

Matth.

Marke 1.

Luke 4.

21. So they entred into Capernaum, and straightway on the Sabboth day hee entred into the Synagogue, and taught.

22. And they were astonied at his doctrine: for he taught them, as one that had authority, and not as the Scribes.

23. And there was in their synagoge a man which had an vn cleane spirit, and hee cryed,

24. Saying, ah, what haue we to do with thee, O Iesus of Nazareth: art thou come to destroy vs? I know thee what thou art ene that holy one of God.

25. And Iesus rebuked him, saying hold thy peace, and come out of him

26. And the vn cleane spirit tare him, and cried with a loude voyce, and came out of him.

27. And they were all amazed, so that they demaunded one of another, saying, what thing is this? what new doctrine is this? for hee commaundeth the fowle spirits with authoritie, and they obey him.

31. And he came downe into Capernaum, a city of Galilee: & ther taught them on the Sabboth dayes.

32. And they were astonied at his doctrine: for his word was with authoritie.

33. And in the Synagogue there was a man, which had a spirit of an vn cleane deuill, which cryed with a loude voyce,

34. Saying, oh, what haue we to doe with thee, thou Iesus of Nazareth? Art thou come to destroy vs I know who thou art, euen the holy one of God.

35. And Iesus rebuked him, saying, hold thy peace, and come out of him. Then the deuill throwing him in the midst of them, came out of him, and hurt him not.

36. So feare came on them all, and they spake among themselves, saying, what thing is this? for with authoritie and power he commaundeth the fowle spirites, and they come out.

It is to bee thought that this man possessed with a deuill was one of that company, which Matthew made mention of somewhat before. But the narration of Marke and Luke is not in vaine: because they shew certaine circumstances, which doe not onely make the miracle more manifest, but also do containe profitable doctrine. For the deuill doth craftily grant, that Christ is the holy one of G O D, that hee might make men suspect that hee hath some familiarie with Christe: by which subtiltie hee also endeououred to bring the Gospell into suspicion, and at this day hee ceaseth not to attempt the same. This is the cause why Christ causeth him to hold his peace. And it may bee that this confession was violently wrested out of him: but these two doe not differ betwene themselves, that hee being enforced to giue place to the power of Christ, that hee might proclaime him to bee the holy one of God, and yet subtilly hee endeouoreth to couer the glory of Christ, with his darknes. It is also to bee noted, that hee doeth so flatter Christ, that hee might craftily conuay himselfe from his hand. And after this maner he fighteth with himselfe: for to what purpose is Christ sanctified of the Father, but that deliuering men from the tyrannie of the Deuill, hee might overthrow his kingdome, but because Sathan cannot abide that power, which hee perceyueth to bee prepared for his destruction, hee desires to make Christ quiet, and

to be content with a vaine title.

MAR. 22. *They were astonished at his doctrine.* The Euangelists doe meane that the power of the spirit did appeare in the wordes of Christ, which caused euen the prophane and colde hearers to woonder at them. LVKE sayeth, that his word was with authoritie: that is, full of dignitie. Marke setteth it out more fully, and addeth an Antithesis, that it was vnlike to the wordes of the Scribes. But when they were adulterous interpreters of the Scripture, their doctrine was literall and dead, which shewd no force of the spirit, and there was no maiestie in it, but such colde stiffe, as may at this day bee seene in the speculative dignitie of poperie. Those masters doe imperiously thunder out whatsoeuer they thinke good. But when they in prophane manner do brabble of diuinitie, so that no religion appeareth in their disputations, whatsoeuer they bring is filthy and toytill: for Paule hath not sayde in vaine, the kingdome of God standeth not in word, but in power.

1. Co. 4. 28

In summe, the Euangelists doe shewe, that when the maner of teaching was degenerate and very corrupt, which touched the minds of men with no reuerence of God, then the diuine power of the spirit was euidently scene in the wordes of Christ, which gave him credit. This is the power or rather dignitie and authoritie, wherewith the people were astonished.

LV. 33. *A man which had an vncleane spirit.* This speech auayleth as much as if Luke should haue sayd, that hee was stirred vp by the motion of the deuill. For by the permission of God, Sathan possessed the powers of the soule: so that he would enforce them as well to speake, as to other motions at his pleasure. Therefore when men possessed with diuels do speake, the diuels do speake in them, and by them, whom they haue authoritie to rule. It is probable that the title of the holy one of God was taken out of the common and accustomed maner of speaking: and therefore they so called the Messias: because hee was separte from all other, as one endued with a singular grace, and the head of all the Church.

MAR. 26. *The vncleane spirit erre him.* Luke vseth a more gentle worde, yet in sense they agree very well: because they both would teach, that the departure of the deuill, was violent and forcible. Therefore he so threw downe the wretched man, as if hee would haue torne him in sunder: yet Luke sayeth, that his purpose was in vaine, not that, that force was altogether without hurt, or at least without some paine: but that hee was after deliuered a whole and a sounde man from the deuill.

LVKE 36. *So feare came on them all.* The fruite of the miracle is, that they are enforced to thinke that there is in CHRIST somewhat more then appertayneth to men. And they wisely referre the glory and power of the miracle to the doctrine. What doctrine is this (say they) whereto the Devils themselves are enforced to obey? They call it a newe doctrine, not in reproch, but because they acknowledge some vnusall and extraordinary thing in it. Therefore they doe not accuse it of newnes, that they might discredite it: but this is rather a poynt of admiration, in that they denie it eyther to be common, or in the power of man. In this they onely offend, that

that they continue still in their doubting, when it becommeth the children of God to go on in further profiting.

Matth.8.

Mar.1.

Luke.4.

14. And when Iesus came to peters house hee sawe his wines mother layd down, and sick of a feuer.

15. And hee touched her hand, and the feuer left her, so shee arose and ministred vnto them.

16. When the euen was come, they brought vnto him many that were possessed with diuels: and hee cast out the spirits with his word and healed those that were sicke.

17. That it might be fulfilled, which was spokd by Isaias the prophet, saying, he toke our infirmities, & bare our sicknesses.

18. And when Iesus saw great multitudes of people about him, hee commanded them to go ouer the water.

29. And assoone as they were come oute of the Synagogue, they entred into the house of Simon and Andrew, with Iames and Iohn.

30. And Simons wines mother, in law lay sicke of a feuer, & anon they told him of her.

31. And hee came and tooke her by the hande, and lifte her vpp, and the feuer forsooke her by & by, and she ministred vnto them.

32. And when euen was come & the sunne was down, they brought to him all that were diseased, and them that were possessed with diuels.

33. And the whole Citty was gathered together at the dore.

34. And hee healed many that were sicke of diuers diseases: and he cast out many deuilles, and suffered not the deuils to say, that they knew him.

35. And in the morning very early before day, Iesus arose, and wente out into a solitary place, and there prayed.

36. And Simon and they that were with him, followed after him.

37. And when they had found him, they sayde vnto him, all men seeke for thee.

38. Then he sayde vnto them, let vs goe into the next townes, that I may preach there also: for I came out for that purpose.

39. And hee preached in theyr Synagogues throughout all Galile, and cast the deuils out.

38. And he rose vp, and came out of the Synagogue, and entred into Simons house. And Simons wines mother was taken with a great feuer: & they required him for her.

39. Then hee stoode ouer her, and rebuked the feuer, and it left her: and immediately she rose, and ministred vnto them.

40. Nowe when the sunne was downe, all they that had sicke folke of diuers diseases, brought the vnto him, and hee layd his handes vpon euery one of them, and healed them.

41. And deuilles also came out of many, crying, & saying, Thou art the Christ the son of God: but hee rebuked them, and suffered them not to say, that they knew him to bee Christ.

42. And when it was daye, hee departed, and went forth into a deserte place, and the people sought him, and came to him, and kept him, that he should not depart from them.

43. But he sayd vnto them, surely I must also preache the Gospell of the kingdome of God to other citties: for therefore am I sent.

29. MAR. They entred into the house. It may bee easily gathered, that

Matthew doth not rehearse this history in his order, by this, that Marke sayth, that Christ namely had but foure disciples onely following him. Also when he came out of the Sinagogue, and went straight into Peters house, it is easily seene that the time was not exactly obserued by Matthew. Also the Euangelistes seeme to haue reported this myracle for some speciall cause, not that it was more notable then the rest, or more worthy to be remembred: but because that in it he gaue to his disciples a private and secrete token of his grace: then that the healing of this one woman gaue an occasion, or was the procuring of many myacles, so that they came to him from all places to aske his helpe. Yet the power, which Christ shewed here, Luke doth amplifie in one worde, saying that Peters mother in law was taken with a great feuer: for it was the more certaine and notable declaration of diuine power, in a moment of time, and onely by touching, to take away so vehemet & so grievous a disease. And though he could haue done it onely with a becke, yet he touched her hand, eyther to shew his affection, or for that he knew that this signe was then profitable. for we know that he freely vsed outward signes, as the time required.

39. L V. *Hee rebuked the feuer.* Though this speach may seeme hard to the reader not sufficiently exercised in the Scripture, yet it wanteth not a reason. For the feuer and other diseases, famine, pestilence, and all kind of misery are the officers of God, by whom he executeth his iudgements. Therefore as at his commaundement and appointment, it is sayd that hee sendeth forth such messengers: so also doth he rebuke & call backe, when he thinketh good. Matthew & Marke conceale how he healed others. Luke sayth it was by laying on of handes. And it was a signe of reconciliation vnder the law, wherefore neither without cause, nor out of time, doth Christ also lay his hands vpon them, whom he absolue from the curse of God. It was also a solemne maner of consecration, as shall more at large be sayd in an other place. But I simply interpret that Christ layd his hands vpon the sicke, that commending them to his father, he might obtaine grace and deliuerance from diseases.

17. M A T. *Which was spoken by Isaias.* This seemeth to be cited little to the purpose: nay, this Prophecie seemeth to be wrested into a contrary sense. For Esaias doth not speake there of myacles, but of the death of Christ: nor of temporall benefites, but of the spirituall and eternall grace. And that which is certainly spoken of the vices of the soule, Matthew applyeth to corporall diseases. The answer is not hard, so that the readers consider not only what Christ outwardly bestowed vpon these sicke people, but to what end he healed their diseases. They felt the grace of Christ in their bodies: but we must looke vpon the ende. For it were very preposterous to stay vpon the outward benefite, as if the sonne of God were a Phisition of the bodyes. What then? namely, he gaue sight to the blinde, that hee might shew himselfe to be the light of the worlde: he restored life to the dead, that he might prooue himselfe to be the life and the resurrection. The same is to be thought of the lame, & of the sicke of the palsey: wherefore let vs follow this analogie, that what benefites soeuer Christ bestowed vpon men in the flesh, wee may refferre the same to the scope which Matthew proposeth: that is, that he was sent of his father, that he might deliuer vs from all euils and miseries.

MARKE. 34. *Hee suffered not the deuils to saye that they knewe him .* There might bee two causes why hee suffered them not: one generall, that as yet the appoynted time of his full reuelation was not come: the other speciall which we touched a little before, that hee refused them as preachers and witnesses of the Godhead, which through their praying, coulde do nothing else but flaunder and discredit him. And this last is without doubt, for the deadly discord ought to bee shewed which the authour of eternall saluation and life should haue with the prince of death and his ministers.

MAT. 18. *When Iesus saw great multitudes.* I doubt not but that Matthew doth briefly touch that which others doe more fully & plentifully set forth. That which is concealed by Mat. the other two do expresse before it was day Christ went secretly into a desert place, to seeke rest. Marke sayth after, that Peter told him that all men sought him. And Luke sayth that the people came thither. Now that Mat. sayth that he went ouer to the further shoare, both they say that he did it, that he might goe through all Galile, that hee might preach in all places. But the further shoare in my iudgement, is called not that which is right ouer against it on the further side, but in respect of that place which was belowe Capernaum. Therefore he so went ouer part of the lake, that hee would not leaue Galile. It is to be noted that he sayth, that hee went or was sent for that ende: for in these wordes he witnesseth, how readily hee was bent to fulfill his office. But if any man shall aske whether it were better for the ministers of the Gospell, to runne hither and thither, that they might in all places sparingly & slenderly tast the doctrine of God, or remaine teaching their hearers perfectly whome they haue once wonne: I answer, the purpose of Christ wherof mention is here made, was grounded vpon a most notable cause, because it was agreeable to the commandement and calling of the father. For Christe was in short time to goe throughout Iudea, that hee might euery where waken the mindes of men, as with the sound of a trumpet, to heare the Gospell, which matter shall more largely be entreated of other where.

Matthew.

Marke .3.

Luke 6.

13. Then he went vpp into a mountaine, & called vnto him whome he woulde, and they came to him.

14. And he appoynted twelue, that they should be with him, and that he might send them to preach

15. And that they might haue power to heale sicknesses, & to cast out deuils.

16. And the first was Simon, and he named Simon, Peter.

17. Then Iames the sonne of Zebedee, & Iohn, Iames brother, (and named the Boanarges, which is the sonnes of thunder.)

12. And it came to passe in those dayes that hee went into a mountaine to pray, and spent the night in prayer to God.

13. And when it was day, hee called his disciples, and of them he chose twelue, which also hee called Apostles.

14. Simon whome he named: also Peter, and Andrew his brother, Iames and Iohn, Philip and Bartlemewe.

15. Matthew and Thomas: Iames the sonne of Alphew, and Simon called Zelous.

16. Iudas Iames brother, and

18. And

K 1

Iudas

18. And Andrew, & Phillip, and Bartemew, and Mathew, and Thomas, and Iames, the sonne of Alphew, and Thaddew, and Symon the Cunnite:

19. And Iudas Iscariot, who also betraied him.

Iudas Iscariot, which was also the traitor.

17. Then hee came downe with them, and stode in a playne place, with the company of his disciples, and a great multitude of people out of all Iudea, and Ierusalem, & from the sea coast of Tyrus & Sidon, which came to heare him, and to be healed of him.

18. And they that were vexed with foule spirites, and they were healed.

19. And the whole multitude soughte to touch him: for there went power out of him, and healed them all.

MARKE. 13. He went vp into a mountaine. By this election he doth not as yet ordaine the Apostles, that they shoulde presently execute their office: but only in hope of Apostleship, he adopteth them as disciples to keepe him company, wherein the interpret. rs haue bin deceiued, which vnadvisedly doe confound these places with the tenth chapter of Mar. And the wordes do evidently declare, that they were onely appointed that they should after be of that ambassage, which is enioyned them in Matthew. And Marke & Luke do afterwarde in the right place set downe their sending forth, which Matthew doeth there make mention of. And it is no maruel if that the heavenly master would a little frame and accustomethem to so hard a charge, whose rudnesse could not be restrayned by long vse of discipline. Both the Euangelistes say that Christ went vp into a mountaine. Luke declareth the cause, that he might the more freely pray out from company, which he was wont to do very often, as may be seene in other places. But this example ought to be a pe fecte rule to vs, that we doe begin with prayer, so oft as pastors are to bee chosen for Churches: otherwise whatsoeuer we attempt, shall not prosper. For the Lord did not pray so much for his owne sake, as that he might prescribe a law for vs: for we want wisdom & counsell, and though we were most prouident, yet we cannot in any thing be easier deceiued then in this. Now how can we be out of daunger of offending, except the Lorde shoulde moderate our affections, considering how great the force, or rather the violence of fauour and loue, or of hatred, or of ambition is to draw vs away? Furthermore, though there bee great diligence vsed in the election, yet all thinges shall prosper ill, except the Lorde take vpon him to gouerne those that are chosen, and endew them with necessary giftes. What then? will some men say: Did not Christ earnestly require of his father that hee would rule his election? I graunt this, and withall I adde, that by this testimonie he declared how carefull he was for his Church: therefore he prayed not his father, after a daily manner, but spent all the night in prayer. But if hee that was full of the holy Ghost did so earnestly and so carefully pray his father to be gouernour of his election, how much is our necessitie greater.

MARKE. 13. And called vnto him whome hee would. I doubt not but that Marke would hereby signifie that they were taken to this so honorable an office by the meere grace of Christe, not for theyr owne worthynesse. For if thou vnderstande that they were chosen that were
more

more notable then others, this cannot agree in Iudas. Therefore the meaning is that the Apostleship was not bestowed according to the merits of men, who were nothing worthy to be lift vp into that estate, but by the free mercy of God. And so that was fulfilled that Christ sayd other where, you haue not chosen me, but I haue chosen you. Iohn 15. 16. In the same sence also Paul often commendeth the purpose of God in his Apostleship. But heere doe arise moe questions, First, why he chose Iudas of a determinate purpose, whom hee knew to bee unworthy of that honour, and should become a traitour. Then, why God being so earnestly betought of his sonne, suffered so faithlesse and wicked a man to creepe into the cheife order of his Church, as if he had despised Christ. Threly why hee would that the first fruites of his Church should bee polluted with so vile a reproach. Fourthly, why Christ wittingly and willingly preferred Iudas before honest and faithfull ministers. The first obiection is thus answered: It was the will of the Lord purposely to meete with such offences that should fall out, least wee should be troubled beyond measure, so oft as we see false teachers occupie a place in the Church. Or that of professours of the Gospell there become Apostates. And also in the person of one man, hee gaue an example of a horrible defection, least they that are placed in higher estate of dignitie, should flatter themselves too much. Yet let vs not say that Christ suffered the repulse. When the father in wonderfull counsell adioyned one deuill to eleuen Angels, yet hee so gouerned the falling out of the matter, that his falling awy shoulde confirme the faith of the Church, rather then shake the same. This same answer may be giuento the third question. In the first beginnings it was speedely shewed what the estate of the Church should be, least the weake should waxe faint at the fall of any of the reprobate: for it is vnmeete that the stability of the Gospell should depend vpon men. As concerning the last Obiection, Christ did not preferre Iudas before the holy and the godly Disciples. but he lifted him vp on high, from whence hee was to fall, because he would he should bee a spectacle to all men, and an instruction to all ages, that no man should abuse the honour giuento him of GOD: then the pillars falling, that they that seeme to bee of the common sorte of the faithfull might remaine steadfast.

L V K E. 13. *Which also he called Apostles.* This may bee expounded two wayes. Eyther that hee after consecrating them into their office, gaue this name vnto them: Eyther that he gaue them this title in hope of the dignitie to come that they might knowe to what purpose they were seperate from the common sort, and for what vse they were ordained. Which latter exposition doeth agree with the wordes of Marke: for hee saith, that Christ did this, that they should be with him, and that he might send them to preach. Therefore his will was, that they should be his companions, vpon whom he would lay a greater charge, for when he sayth that they should be with him, and that hee would send them forth to preach, he doth not appoynt that they should bee both in one moment of time, as I haue sayd before.

M A R. 16. *And hee named Symon, Peter.* Although it behoueth all Christians to bee liuing stones of the spirituall temple, yet Christ for the measure of grace which he would bestow vpon Simon, gaue him a peculiar name, neyther doth
his

Eph. 3.7
Col 1. 28.

his shamefull infirmities in denying the Lord hinder this : for with this title his invincible power and constancie, which continued euen to death, is set forth. Yet the Papistes are to be laughed at, which thereof gather that the church was grounded vpon him, as shalbe shewed more at large in the 16. chapter of Matthew. Christ called the sonnes of Zebedeus, the sons of thunder, for that hee would giue them a founding voyce wherewith they should thunder throughout all the world. And the thunder out of the mouth of Iohn is heard to this day, and it is not to be doubted but that his brother shoke the earth while hee liued. But the word is corrupt, for the perfect pronounciation shoulde bee *BENÆ Reges* or *Ragas*. But it is not vnknowne howe easily wordes are changed when they are translated into another tongue.

Math. 5.

Marke.

Luke. 6.

1. And when he saw the multitude, he went vp into a mountaine: & when he was set, his disciples came to him.

2. And hee opened his mouth and taught them, saying:

3. Blessed are the poore in spirit for theirs is the kingdome of heauen.

4. Blessed are they that mourne: for they shalbe comforted.

5. Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherite the earth.

6. Blessed are they which hunger & thirst for righteousness: for they shall be filled.

7. Blessed are the mercifull: for they shall obtaine mercie.

8. Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God.

9. Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shalbe called the children of God.

10. Blessed are they which suffer persecution for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdome of heauen.

11. Blessed are you when men reuile you, & persecute you, & say all manner of euil against you for my sake, falsely.

12. Reioyce I say and be glad, for great is your reward in heauen: for so persecuted they the Prophets which were before you.

10. And he lifted vp his eyes vpon his disciples, and sayde, Blessed bee yee poore: for yours is the kingdome of heauen.

21. Blessed are yee that hunger now, for yee shall be satisfied. Blessed are yee that weepe now: for yee shall laugh.

22. Blessed are yee when men hate you, and when they seperate you, and reuile you, and put out your name as euill, for the sonne of man sake.

23. Reioyce you in that day, and bee glad: for behold your reward is great in heauen: for after this maner their fathers did to the Prophets.

24. But woe be to you that are rich: for yee haue receiued your consolation.

25. Woe bee to you that are full: for yee shall hunger. Woe bee to you that now laugh: for yee shall waile and weepe.

26. Woe bee to you when all men speake well of you: for so did their Fathers to the false Prophets.

M A T. 1. He went vp into a mountaine. They that say this is an other sermon of Christes, and not that which is set downe in the 6. chap of Luke, are drawn with too light and friuolous an argument: for that Matthew sayeth that Christ spake in the mountaine to his Disciples, and that Luke seemeth to note, that hee spake vnto them in a plaine place. For they doe
very

very preposterously read the wordes of Luke, adioyning them together, that Christ came downe into a plaine place, and there he lifting vp his eyes vpo his disciples, spake thus. For it was the purpose of both the Euangelistes, to gather together into one place, the principall poyntes of the doctrine of Christ, which did belong to the rule of godly and holy life. Therefore though Luke had first made mention of a plaine place, yet hee doth not in a continuall course prosecute the same history, but frō myrales he passeth to doctrine, neither assigning time nor place. As in Matthew there is no noting of the time, but onely of the place. And it is very likely that Christ did not so preach, but after hee hadde chosen the twelue. But I would not bee too curious in keeping the order of time, which I did see not regarded by the spirit of God. For this ought to suffice the godly and modest readers, that they haue heere sette before their eyes a breife summe of the doctrine of Christ, gathered out of many and diuers of his Sermons, whereof this was the first, where hee entreateth with his disciples of true felicitie.

2. *Hee opened his mouth.* Heere in the Hebrew phrase is the figure *Pleonasmus* vsed, for that which were corrupt in other tongues, is vsuall amongst the Hebrewes, to say hee opened his mouth, for he beganne to speake. And though many thinke it to be an Emphaticall kind of speech, vsed when either some waighty or notable matter is vttered either in good part or in euil. Yet because many places of Scripture doe gain say the same, the first exposition doth please me best. Also let their subtile speculation goe, which doeth teach that Christ allegorically led his disciples into the mountaine, that hee might carry their mindes on high, farre from earthly cares and studies, for by going vp the mount, hee rather sought a secrete place out of the way, that being farre from company, hee might refresh him selfe a little with his disciples from wearines. And first it is to bee considered for what cause Christe spake to his disciples of true felicitie. Wee know that not onely the common people, but also the wise men were herein deceiued, thinking him to be happy that led a merry & a quiet life, free from all griefe, and had what he desired. And certainly by the iudgement almost of all men, felicitie is esteemed by the present state. Therefore Christ, that hee might accustome his to the bearing of the crosse, reprooueth this wicked opinion, that they are happy which now liue well and prosperously according to the flesh. For it cannot bee that they shoulde patiently submit their necke to beare sorrowes and iniuries, which account patience to bee an enemy to a blessed life. Therefore it is one comforte whereby the bitterness of the crosse and of all mischiefes is mitigated & also made sweet, while we are perswaded, that in the midst of miseries wee are happy: because that our patience is blessed of the Lorde, and shortly there shall folowe a more ioyfull ende. I grant that this doctrine doth much disagree from cōon sense: but so it behoued the disciples of Christ to be taught wisdom, that they might account their felicitie to be out of this worlde, and beyond the vnderstanding of flesh. And though carnall reason will neuer allowe that which Christ here teacheth, yet hee proposeth no fantastical deice, as in times past the Stoickes did sport with their Paradoxes: but in deede he declareth way they are truly happy, whose estate is accounted miserable. Therefore let vs remember that this is the chiefe poynte of the doctrine: that Christe denyeth that they are miserable.

miserable & wretched that are oppressed with the iniuries of the wicked, & are subiect to diuers dangers And Christ doth not only proue that they are of a peruerse iudgement, which measure the felicity of man by the present state, because that the miseries of the godly shal shortly be chaunged into better: but also hee exhorteth the to patience, by proposing a hope of reward before them.

3. *Blessed are the poore in spirit.* In Luke there is a bare Metaphor But Matthew doth more plainly expresse the mind of Christ, because that the pouerty of many is accursed & vnhappy. Therefore when there be many oppressed with euils, which yet cease not inwardly to swell with pride & cruelty, Christe pronounceth them happy, which being tamed & subdued with troubles, do submit themselves wholly vnto God, & being inwardly humbled, they comit themselves into his custody others do interpret the poore in spirit, which do arrogate nothing to themselves, but throwing downe all trust in flesh, they acknowledge their own need. But because it is necessary to be one, & the same sense in the words of Luke & Matth. It is not to be doubted but they are called poore which are oppressed & afflicted with aduersities. This only is the difference that Mat. by adding the Epithyte, doth restraints the felicity to them only, which vnder the discipline of the crosse haue learned to be humble. *For theirs is.* We see that Christ doth not puffed vp the mindes of his disciples with a vaine perswasion, or harden them with a hard harted obstinacy, as the Stoicks do: but he calling the to the hope of eternal life, he encourageth the to patience; because by this meanes they should enter into the heavenly kingdome. But it is worth the labor to note, that no man is poore in spirit, but he that is brought to nothing in himselfe, and reposeth himselfe in the mercy of God. For they that are broken or ouerwhelmed with desperation, when they fret against God, are of a lofty and proude spirit.

4. *Blessed are they that mourne.* This sentence is not onely next to that which goeth before, but it is an Appendix or confirmation of it. For it was wont to be iudged, that troubles make a man vnhappy, because they alwayes do drawe sorrow and griefe with them, and that nothing is more contrary to felicity then sorrow. But Christ doth not onely deny that they that mourne are miserable, but hee teacheth that they are holpe, euen by that sorrowe to happy life. For that they are by this meenes framed to receiue eternall ioy, and pricked forward as with spurres, least they should seeke any comforte any other where. So Paul sayth to the Romanes, chapter. 5. 3. wee reioyce in tribulations, knowing that tribulation bringeth forth patience, and patience experience, and experience hope, and hope maketh not ashamed.

5. *Blessed are the meeke.* He meaneth those meeke & quiet, which are not easily prouoked with iniuries, & are not giuen to frowardnes for euery offence, but are ready rather to suffer any thing, then to do as the wicked do. But it seemeth very absurd that christ promisseth the inheritance of the earth to such. For they rather vsurp the gouernment of the earth, which couragiously repel all iniuries, & if at any time they be hurt, they are ready with the hand to reuege the same. And certainly experience teacheth, that the wicked do so much the more boldly and stoutly goe on forward, for that they are the more gently borne with. And hereof rose that deuillish prouerbe. They must howle with the woules: because

cause that whosoeuer maketh himselfe a sheepe, is presently to bee deuoured of of the wolues. But Christ opposing his owne aide and the helpe of his Father, against the fury and violence of those euils, doth not without cause declare that the meeke shalbe Lords and inheritors of the earth. The children of this world doe not thinke themselves otherwise in safegard, except they sharply reuenge what euill soeuer is done them, and so with force and armes defende their life. But sith it is certaine that Christ is the onely keeper of our life, there remaineth nothing else, but that wee should hide our selues vnder the shadow of his wings. Also it behooueth vs to be sheepe, if we couet to be accounted of his flocke. If any Obiect, that this heere spoken is against experience: First I woulde hee should weigh how vnquiet those cruell men be, so that they euen trouble themselves, So that in so troublesome a life, though they were the Lordes of the earth a hundred times, yer in possessing all things they possesse nothing. But for the children of God I answere, though they can in no place set their foote vpon their owne ground, yet they quietly inioy a dwelling vpon the earth. And this is not an imagined possession, for they dwell vpon the earth, which they know is granted them from God. Also they are armed with the hande of God against the tempest and rages of all mischeifes, and though they be set forth against all the darts of Fortune, and subiect to all inconuenience of euils, & compassed about with all dangers: yet they dwell safely vnder the defence of God, so that at least they may taste now the fauour of God. And this is sufficient for them, vntill at the last day they enter into the inheritance of the world.

6. *Blessed are they that hunger.* To hunger and to thirst, is by the figure Synecdoche, taken for want, to be without things necessarie, and also to be defrauded of their owne right. That which Mathew sayth, to hunger after righteoussnesse, is a placing of a part for the whole. Yet hee amplifieth the vnworthines, when he sayth that by carefull sighing they get nothing but that which is righteous: as if hee should say: they are blessed, which though they moderat their desires, so that they desire nothing to be giuen them, but that which is right: do yet neuertheless languish as hungry soules. For though their carefulnes where with they bee troubled, is scorned at, yet it is to them a preparation to felicitie, because they shall at length be satisfied: for GOD will at length heare their sighes, and will heare their iust desires, whose office it is to fill the hungry with good things as it is in the Virgins song.

7. *Blessed are the mercifull.* This sentence also is harde and contrary to the iudgement of man. For the worlde accounteth them happy, which are carelesse of the miseries of other menne, and prouide for their owne ease: but Christe heere calleth them blessed, which are not onely readie to beare their owne harmes, but doe also take other mens vpon themselves, that they may helpe them that are in miserie, and willingly ioyne themselves to them that are troubled, and put on the same affections, that thereby they may the more willingly employ themselves to helpe them. Hee addeth, *for they shall obtayne mercie*, that is, not onely with God, but also amongst men themselves, whose mindes God will bow to humanitie. But though sometimes the worlde is vnthankfull, & bestoweth the worst reward vpon them that deserue best, it ought to suffice vs, that there is fauour layde vp with GOD for the mercifull and kinde

kinde, so that they shall haue him kinde and mercifull againe to them.

8. *Blessed are the pure in heart.* Christ seemeth here to say nothing but that which is agreeable to the iudgement of all men. All confesse that cleane heart is the mother of all vertues, but yet it is scarce the hundred man that doth not account subtiltie as a most notable vertue. Hereof it cometh to passe that they are commonly thought blessed, which are most subtile in craftie conueiances, which by cuill meanes doe craftely circumuent them with whom they haue to doe. Therefore Christ agreeth not with the iudgement of the flesh, while he calleth them blessed, which are not delighted with craftinesse, but walke sincerely amongst men, and in wordes and countenance pretend no other thing, then they thinke in heart. And because the simple are laughed at as men nothing warie, and because they doe not with deceite inough provide for themselues, Christ calleth them higher: that if they bee not wise inough to deceiue vpon earth, they shall inioy the sight of God in heauen.

9. *Blessed are the peace-makers.* He doth not onely meane them which loue peace, and flee from quarels as much as in them lieth, but doe also diligently ende dissensions raysed vp amongst others, are the authours of peace vnto all, and doe take away the occasion of hatreds, & displeasures. Neither is this rashly spoken, for, sith it is a painefull & a troublesome matter to pacifie them that disagree amongst themselves, the quiet men which studie to maintaine peace, are enforced to beare this crueltie, that they heare the reproches, the cōplaints and the quarrelles on both partes. And thereof it riseth that euery man would wish to haue them all patrons to be on his side. Therefore, least we should hang vpon the fauour of men, Christ commandeth vs to regarde the iudgement of his father, who being the God of peace, accounteth vs for his children, while we nourish peace, although our labour please not men, For *to be called*, signifieth as much, as *to be accounted*.

10. *Blessed are they which suffer persecution.* The disciples of Christ haue great neede of this doctrine, and how much more the lother and more hardly flesh doth admit the same, so much more diligently it must be meditated. Neyther can we vnder any other condition war vnder Christ then that the greater parte of the world will rise vp in hatred against vs. & shall persecute vs euen to death. So stands the matter, Satan the prince of the world will neuer cease to arme his children with madnes, that they may strike the members of Christ. This is very monstrous and against nature, that they which loue righteousness should be vexed as enemies, which they haue not deserued. Therefore Peter sayth, if

1. Pet. 3. 13. you auoyde from euill deedes, who is he that will harme you? But in so vnbridled wickednes of the world, it falleth out too often, that the good mē through the zeale of righteousness do enflame the displeasures of the wicked against the

But this is the lotte, especially of Christians, to be hated of the greatest number of men: for flesh cannot beare the doctrine of the Gospel: none canne beare to haue their faultes reproofed. They are slyde to suffer for righteousness, which thereby kinde the displeasures of the wicked, and prouoke their fure against them: because that with a care of right and equitie they oppose themselues against euill causes, and defende the good as much as in them lyeth. And in this behalfe the truth of God hath worthily

worthely the cheife place. Wherefore by this note Christ discerneth his Martyrs from wicked men and euill doers. Now I returne to that which I sayd euen now: Syth all that will liue godly in Christ must suffer persecution, as Paul witnesseth, this admonition doth generally belong to all the godly. If that at any time the Lord spareth our weaknesse, and permitteth not the wicked to vex vs at their pleasure: yet it is meete vnder a shadow and at leisure to meditate this doctrine, that wee may bee prepared as oft as neede require to come forth into the field, nor come to the battell except we be well furnished. But sith the condition of the godly is most miserable through the whole course of this life: Christ for a good cause raiseth vs vp in hope of a heauenly life. And herein the sentence of Christ differeth much frō the inuentions of the Stoicks, which commaunde euery man to be satisfied with his owne opinion, that hee might be his owne chuser of felicitie. And Christ doth not vncertainly plant felicitie vpon a vaine imagination, but groundeth the same vppon hope of a rewarde to come.

2.Tim.3.12

11. *When men reuile you.* Luke sayth, when they hate you, and seperate you, and reuile you, and put out your name as euill. By which words Christ would comfort his faithfull ones, that they should not faint in their minds, though they see themselves detested before the world. For this was no small temptation, to be throwne out of the Church as wicked and prophane. For sith hee knewe that nothing was more deadly to the hypocrites, then that hee might foresee with how furious a violence the enemies of the Gospell were enflamed against his litle and despised flocke: his will was perfectly to arme them that they should not be ouerthrowne, though a greate heape of reproches shoulde hang ouer them to ouerwhelme them. And heere appeareth howe popish excommunication is to be feared as nothing, while that those tyrants seperate vs from their Synagogues, because we will not be diuorced from Christ.

12. *Reioyce and be glad, for.* That we should not be ouerthrowne with vniust reproches, he declareth that there is a remedie at hand: for asloone as wee list vp our mindes to heauen, then presently a great occasion of ioy doeth offer it selfe, that it may swallow vp the heauines. The sport which the Papistes make with the name of rewarde, is heere easily wiped away. Neither is there, as they dreame, a mutuall relation, betweene rewarde and merite: but it is a free promise of a rewarde. Further, if wee consider how maimed & corrupt these good deedes are which come euen from the best men, GOD shall neuer finde any worke worthy a rewarde. Again these clauses are to be noted, for my sake, or for the sonne of man, also they shall say al maner of euill against you falsely: least they which suffer persecution for their owne faultes, shoulde presently boast themselves to be Martyrs of Christ. As the Donatistes in times past pleased themselves with this onely title, that they had the magistrates against them. And at this day the Anabaptistes, though they disturbe the Church with their doting dreames, and slander the Gospell, yet they glory that they beare the ensignes of Christ, when as they are condemned righteously. But Christ pronounceth none blessed, but they which suffer in a iust defence of his quarell.

For so persecuted they the Prophets. This was purposely added, least the Apostles hoping to triumph without sweate or trauell, shoulde faint in per-

secutions. For because that euery where in the scripture the restitution of all things is promised in the kingdom of Christ, it was dangerous least they should in a vaine hope live vpon themselves, and neuer thinke of the warfare. And it may be gathered out of other places, that they imagined that the kingdom of Christ, was full of richesse and pleasures. Wherefore Christ doth not without a cause admonish them that the same troubles are prepared for them, which the Prophets sometime had experience of, for as much as they succede in their place. Neither doth hee say that the Prophets were before them onely in respect of time: but because they were of the same order, therefore it behooued them to frame themselves after their example. That common fancie of nine beatitudes is so friuolous, that it neede no long confutation.

L V K E 24. *Woe be to you rich men.* As Luke rehearseth only foure principall blessings: so now he opposeth foure curses, that the sentences might answer one to the other. But this Antithesis doth not onely tend to striking a feare in the wicked, but to the stirring vp of the faithfull, least they should sleep in the vain & captious snares of the world. For we know how quickly and readily a man may bee made drunke with prosperitie, or entangled with the faire speeches of men: whereby also it doth often come to passe that the children of God doe enuie at the reprobate, to whom they see all things flow prosperously and happily. Further, he curseth the rich, not all of the, but they that take their comfort in the world, that is, they so rest in their fortune, that they forget the life that is to come. Therefore he meaneth that richesse are so farre from making a man blessed, that they often become an occasion of destruction. Otherwise God doth not remove rich men out of his kingdome, so that they make not snares for themselves, or by fixing their hope in the earth, doe shut the gate of heauen against themselves. It was aptly sayd of Augustine, who that he might shew that richesse of themselves are no hinderance to the children of God, doth say that poore Lazarus was receiued into the boosome of rich Abraham. In the same sence doth he curse them that are full and haue abundance, because they being puffed vp with a confidence in present ioyes, that they refuse all heavenly ioyes. The same is to be thought of laughter: for now by laughter he vnderstandeth them that are giuen to the pleasure of Epicures, and are drowned in the pleasures of the flesh, and doe flee from all troubles that are to be endured, for the defence of Gods glory. The last woe tendeth to the correction of ambition: for there is nothing more common then to see the prayes of men, or at the least to bee entangled with them. Christ therefore sheweth that the fauour of men is venomous and deadly, that hee might feare his Disciples from it. But this admonition especially belongeth to teachers: who haue more neede to feare ambition then any pestilence, for it cannot be but that they should defile the pure doctrine of God, when as they seeke after the fauour of men. That Christ sayth *All men*, ought to be referred to the children of this worlde which speake well of none but of deceiuers and false Prophets. For the faithfull and good ministers of sound doctrine haue their prayse and fauour with good men. Therefore the wicked loue of the flesh is heere condemned: for he cannot be the seruant of Christ that seekes to please men, as Paul teacheth.

Matthew 5.

13. Ye are the salt of the earth: but if the salt haue lost his sauoure, wherewith shall it bee salted? It is thence forth good for nothing, but to bee cast out, and to be troden vnder foote of men.

14. Yee are the light of the world: a citty that is set vpon a hill, cannot be hidden.

15. Neither do menne light a candle, and put it vnder a bushell, but on a candlesticke, and it giueth light vnto al that are in the house.

16. Lette your lightes so shine before men, that they may see your good workes, and glorifie your father which is in heauen.

Marke 9.

49. For euery manne shall bee salted with fire: and euery sacrifice shall be salted with salt.

50. Salt is good: but if the salt be vn-sauory, wherewith shal it bee seasoned? Hane salt in youre selues, and haue peace one with another.

Marke 4.

21. Also he sayd vnto them: is the candle light to be put vnder a bushell, or vnder a table, and not on a candlesticke?

Luke 14.

34. Salt is good: but if false haue lost his sauour, wherewith shal it be salted?

35. It is neither meete for the land, nor yet for the dunghil, but men cast it oute: He that hath eares to heare let him heare.

Luke 8.

16. No man whē helighteth a candle, couereth it vnder a vessell, neither putteth it vnder the table, but setteth it on a candlesticke, that they that enter in, may see the light.

Luke 11.

33. No man lighteth a candle, & putteth it in a priuy place, neither vnder a bushell: but on a candlestick, that they which come in, may see the light.

MAT. 23. Yee are the salt of the earth. That which is proper to the doctrine, hee doeth attribute to the persons, to whome the ministerie of the same was committed. For Christ by calling his Apostles the salt of the earth, doeth meane that it is their office to season the earth: because that men haue nothing but that which is vn-sauory, vntill they be seasoned with heavenly doctrine. And after hee admonisheth them to what they are called, and pronounceth a grieuous and horrible iudgement against them, except they performe their office. And he sheweth that the doctrine which was layde vpon with them, is so adioyned to a good conscience and to a godly & vpright life: so that the corruption which were to bee borne with in others, is detestable in them, and to be accounted as monstrous: as if he should say, if other menne are vn-sauory before God, there is salt giuen to you, wherewith they may bee made sauary: but if you be vn-sauory, from whence shall you haue remedy, that ought to helpe others? But the Lord doth excellently persecute his Mesasphore, when he sayth that other thinges doe degenerate from their owne nature, are yet after their corruption profitable some way: but that salt is hurtfull, so that it also maketh the very dunghilles barren. This therefore is the summe. The sicknes is very incurable, when that the ministers and teachers of the worde doe corrupt and make themselves vn-sauory: because they ought with their salt to season the rest of the worlde.

Furthermore, this admonition is not only profitable for the ministers: but also for the whole flocke of Christe: for sith it was the will of God that the earth should bee seasoned with his word, it followeth that whatsoeuer wanteth this salte, is vnfauiory before him, although it fauour neuer so well vnto men. Wherefore there is nothing better, the to admit that seasoning, by which meanes only our vnfauiorines is amended. But yet let the seasoners take heed that they nourish not the world in his corruption, and especially that they infect it not with a vile & corrupt fauour. Therefore the wickednes of the Papistes is not to be borne with. As though it were the purpose of Christ, to giue vnto his Apostles an vnbrideled liberty, and to make them tyrantes ouer soules, and not rather to admonish them of their dutie, that they turne not out of the right way. Christe declareth what manner of teachers hee would haue for his Church. They that by no law doe challenge themselves to be Apostles, do vnder this couer maintaine what abomination soeuer they please to bring in, because Christ called Peter and such like, salte of the earth. And yet they do not consider how grievous and seuer a threatning is added, that they are worst of all if they become vnfauiory. This sentence is placed by Luke abruptly, but to the same end that it is read here, so that it need not any peculiar exposition.

MARK E. 49. *Every manne shall bee seasoned with fire.* I haue ioyned these woordes of Marke to the former woordes of Matthew: not that they altogether agree in sense, or that they were vsed at the same place or time, but rather that the readers may the better by this comparison perceiue the diuers vse of the same sentence. When as Christe hadde spoken of the euerlasting fire, (as Marke reporteth) he on the other side exhorteth his, that they should now rather offer themselves to the Lord, to be seasoned with fire and salte, that they may be made holy sacrifices, least that by their sinnes they purchase to themselves that fire which is neuer quenched. To be seasoned with fire, is an vnproper speech, but because that the nature of salte and fire is like in purging and trying out of humours, therefore Christ applyed the same woorde to both. Now wee vnderstand the occasion of this sentence: namely, that the faythfull shoulde not refuse to bee salted with fire and salte, since without this they cannot be made holy to God. And he alludeth to the commandement of the law, where the Lord expressly forbiddeth that no oblation be made without salte. And now in the Gospell hee teacheth the faythfull to bee seasoned, that they may be sanctified. When after he addeth, salte is good: he generally extendeth it to all, whom God once vouchsafeth to season with his word, and hee exhorteth them that they alwayes keepe their fauour. The metaphore is somewhat the harder, because that hee calleth whatsoeuer is seasoned by the name of salte: yet the sense is not made any thing the doubtfuller by it, for when they haue through their carelesnesse lost their fauour which they hadde by the grace of God, there is no mote remedy. And so are they vterly lost, that corrupt their sayth, (whereby they were consecrate) and themselves, seeing that a good fauour cannot be obtained by any other seasoning. Furthermore, they are become corrupt by forsaking the grace of God, and are worse then the infidels, even as salte corrupteth the earth and the dunghill.

MAR.

MAR. 50. *Haue salt in your selues.* This worde may be taken heere diuers wayes as it may signifie either a seasoning of good sauour which is obtained by faith, or the wisdom of the spirit: as when Paul commandeth that our communication should be seasoned with salt, hee meaneth that it ought to be purged and pure from all prophane follies and corruptions, and to be filled with spirituall grace, which may edifie, and with his sauour may perfume all that shall heare it. If this exposition stand, then the last clause must be vnderstood of mutuall peace, which is nourished with that salt. Yet because it is more probable that this latter sentence doeth depende of the former speech, Christ seemeth to me to exhort his disciples to preferue the force & strength of their faith which may also helpe others. As if he should haue sayd, you must doe your diligence, that you be not onely seasoned within, but also that you may season others: yet because salt doth bite with his sharpnesse, he therefore doeth presently admonish, that the seasoning should so be tempered, that peace may yet remaine safe.

Col. 4. 6

MAT. 14. *You are the light of the world.* Though wee bee all children of the light, after that we be lightened with faith, and are commanded to beare burning lights in our hands, least we wander in darkenes, and also to shew the way of life to others: yet because the preaching of the Gospell was committed to the Apostles about all others, and at this day commaunded to the pastours of the Church, therefore Christ giueth this title peculiarly to them: as if he should haue sayd, that they were on this condition placed in such a degree, that they might giue light as from an high to allothers: After he addeth two similitudes. A towne set vpon a hill cannot be hid, neither is it vse to hide a candle when it is lighted: By which words he would signifie that they should so liue, as if they were set out to be looked vpon of all men. And certainly, the higher a mā is placed, the greater hurt hee doth by his euill example, if hee behaue himselfe peruerfly. Therefore Christ willed his Apostles to bend themselves the more to godly and holy life, then any meane men of the common sort: because that all mens eyes were set vpon them as vpon lanternes, neyther are they by any meanes to be borne with, except that godlines and integritie of life do answere to the doctrine whereof they are ministers. The applying of this similitude by Marke and Luke seemeth to be vnlike, for there Christe generally admonisheth them, diligently to take heed least any man being in darkenes should nourish vp himselfe in a libertie of sinning: for that which is hid for a season, shall at length be reuealed And this is the meaning, except that Christ rehearsed both these sentences abruptly not depending of the text.

MAT. 16. *Let your light so shine before men.* After that hee hadde taught his Disciples, that they are so placed that their vices as well as their vertues are seene farre off, eyther for good or for euill example: now he commaundeth them so to frame their life, that they may moue all men to glorifie GOD. Let men (sayth hee) see your good workes. For as Paul witnesseth, the faithfull doe prouide for good things, not onely before GOD, but also before men. For that hee doeth after commaunde them in secrete and priuily to doe their good woorkes, is onely spoken to repooue their ambition. But now hee commendeth to them a farre other end, that is, the glory

2. Cor. 8. 21

of God alone. Furthermore, if the glory of good workes cannot be rightly attributed to God, except they be acknowledged as receiued from him, and he accounted as the onely authour of them: Heereby it appeareth that without open and grosse contempt of God, freewill cannot bee exalted, as if that good workes either in part or in whole sprang out of the power of man. Againe it is to be noted how louingly God dealeth with vs, in calling good workes ours, whereof by right he should ascribe the whole prayse vnto himselfe.

Mathew. 5

17. *Thinke not that I am come to destroy the law or the Prophets, I am not come to destroy them, but to fulfill them.*

18. *For truly I say vnto you: Till heauen and earth perish, one iose, or one title of the lawe shall not scape, till all things be fulfilled.*

19. *Whosoener ihesefore shall breake one of these least commaundemets and teach men so, hee shall bee called the least in the kingdome of heauen: but whosoener shall obserue and teach them, the same shall bee called great in the kingdome of heauen.*

Marke

Luke. 16.

17 *Now it is more easie that heauen and earth should passe away, then that one title of the law should full.*

17. *Thinke not.* Though Christ was of that perfection of life, that he might rightly say that he came to fulfill the law, yet he doth not here entreate of life, but of doctrine. Because that he did proclaime that the kingdome of God was come, and did stirre vp the mindes of men with an vnwoonted hope, and did also receiue his disciples by baptisme: It is probable that the mindes of many doubted, and diligently sought to what purpose that newnesse tended. Now CHRIST declareth that his doctrine is so farre from any dissenting with the law, so that it agreeth very well with the law and the Prophets, and not so onely, but it bringeth a full perfection to the same. And it seemeth that hee was especially led by two causes to testifie this consent of the lawe and the Gospell. As soone as there springs out any new kinde of teaching, the comon people take it as if there should be an alteration of all things. And the preaching of the gospell was in that order (as I said euen now) that made them hope that the church should be altered into an other estate then it was before: they did therefore thinke that the olde and vsuall kinde of gouernement was abolished. Which opinion had bin very hurtfull many wayes: for the godly worshippers of God, would neuer haue embraced the Gospell, if it had beene a defection from the lawe, and the light and trouble some spirites woulde assay by taking such an occasion greedily to ouerthrow the state of religion: for wee knowe howe ouerthwartly rashnesse lifts vpe it selfe in new things. Furthermore, Christ saw very many of the Iewes, which though they professed that they beleeued the lawe, yet they were altogether prophane and degenerate, for the estate of things amongst that people were so decayed, and all things were filled with such corruptions, so that through eyther slouth or malice, the Priestres had quenched the pure light of doctrine, so that there remaind no
great

greate reuerence of the lawe. If that there hadde bene brought a new kinde of doctrine, that should haue discredited the law and the Prophetes, then religion hadde bene miserably shaken. This seemeth to bee the first cause why Christe denyed that he came to destroy the lawe, as it may be easily gathered out of the texte. For to confirme the same, he presently addeth that it cannot bee that one iote or tittle of the lawe shoulde passe vnfulfilled, and he accuseth those teachers that doe not labour faythfully in mayntaining the authoritie of the same. And the second cause was, that he might take away the vile reproch which the rude and ignorant would charge him with. For it appeareth that the Scribes charged his doctrine with this fault, in so much that he inueigheth against them.

Wee must consider this purpose of Christ, that he so calleth and exhorteth the Iewes to receiue the Gospell, that yet hee keepeth them vnder obedience of the lawe: then hee mightily refelleth those vnwoorthy reproches and euils, wherewith the enemies sought to bring his preaching into slander and suspicion. For if any minde to restore thinges confused into a better estate, hee must alwayes vse this wisdom and moderation, that the people may knowe that the eternall word of God is touched thereby, & that there is no new thing thrust in, which derogareth any thing from the scripture: least any suspicion of repugnancie should weaken the fayth of the godly, and least that rash vnaduised men should become insolent vnder pretence of holinesse: Lastly, that the prophane contempt of the word of God may bee stayed, and that religion bee not brought into no reputation amongst the vnlearned. And this defence of Christ wherewith he excuseth his doctrine, ought to comfort vs, if wee at this day suffer like reproaches. The same fault was also objected against Paule, that hee Act. 21. 21. was an Apostate from the lawe of God, wherfore it is no maruell if the papistes out of the same mould do coyne the like against vs. And by the exāple of Christ it is meete to auoide slanderous reportes, yet so, that the truth may bee freely professed, though it bee subiect to many vniust reproches. *I came not to destroy,* God hadde promised a newe couenant at the comming of Christ, but he sheweth also that it shall not bee diuers from the firste, but that this rather was the ende that the league which hee had made with his people from the beginning, might bee sanctified for euer. I will write (sayth he) my lawes in their hearts, and I will forget their sinnes: By these woordes hee is so farre from departing Ier. 31. 33. from the former couenauent, that he rather affirmeth that it shall then bee established and confirmed when as the new shall come in place. And that was the meaning of the wordes of Christ, when he sayd that he came to fulfill the lawe. For hee fulfilled it truly, quickening the dead letter with his spirite: then hee indeede performed that which before was shewed onely vnder figures. So that the curse being abrogate, the subiection is taken away, and a liberty purchased for the faythfull, and nothing is derogated from the doctrine of the law, but onely expoundeth the minde of the lawe giuer, as appeareth Galathians the third and the fourth Chapters.

Therefore as concerning the doctrine, wee may not imagine a nye abrogation of the Lawe by the comming of Christ. For sith it is

an euerallasting rule of a godly and a holy life, it must bee vnchangeable, as the iustice of God is one, and the same which is therein comprehended.

As concerning the Ceremonies, though they may be accounted as a certaine addition to the same, yet the onely vse of them was abrogate: but the signification was the more approoued. So that the coming of Christ did not derogate any thing from the ceremonies, but rather the truth of the shadowes being shewen forth, doth obtaine the more assured credit vnto them: while we beholding the perfecte effecte, doe acknowledg that they are not vaine nor vnprofitable. Therefore let vs learne or keepe this sacred knoute of the lawe & the Gospell inuiolable, which many do wickedly dissolue: And it doth much auaille to the establishing of the truth of the Gospell, while wee heare that it is nothing else but the fulfilling of the law, so that in a mutuall consent they shew that God is the author of them both.

18. *Till heauen and earth perishe.* Luke vseth other woordes, but the same sense. *It is more easie for heauen and earth to passe away, then that any title of the law should fall.* For it was the will of Christ to teach in both places, that there is nothing so sure in the whole frame of the world, as is the certaine truth of the law, and that in euery point of the same. Some do very subtilie play with the woord *until*, as if that the passing of heauen & earth which shall bee in the last day of iudgement, should put an end to the law & the prophets. And truly, as the tongues shall then cease, and propheties be abolished, so I thinke that the wrytten lawe with the exposition shall cease. But because I thinke that Christ spake more simply, I will not feede the readers eares with such deuises. Therefore let it suffice vs to vnderstand this, that heauen should fall, and the whole frame of the world should come together, rather then the certainty of the lawe should wauer. But what is the meaning of this, all thinges of the lawe shall be performed euen to the least title? For we see how farte menne are from the perfect fulfilling of the lawe, euen they that are regenerate with Gods spirite: I answere, this fulfilling is not referred to the life of menne, but to the perfect truth of the doctrine, as it hee shoulde say, there is nothing inconstant in the lawe, and nothing put rathly in the same: Therefore it cannot bee that one letter of the same shoulde vanish away.

19. *Whoso euer therefore shall breake.* Here Christe speaketh namely of the preceptes of life, or of the ten woordes, according to which prescript order, it be cometh all the children of God to frame their liues. Therefore he pronounceth them to be false & peruerse teachers, which keepe not their disciples vnder obedience of the lawe: and that they are vnwoorthy to haue a place in the Church, which diminish the authoritie of the law in the least parte of the same: and that they are good and faythfull ministers of GOD, which teach the obseruation of the lawe, as well in example of life as in woordes. Also he calleth them the leaste commaundementes of the lawe, according to the sense and iudgement of men: for though there is not like waight in all commaundementes, but while they bee compared betweene themselves, some are lesse then other: yet may we nothing sooner esteeme and account that, as little, whereof the heauenly lawgiuer hath vouchsafed to giue a commaundement.

For

For what sacrifice were it contemptuously to receive that, which commeth out of his mouth? For by this meanes his maiesty shoulde haue beene abased: wherefore whereas Christ calleth them the least precepts, is a kind of yeelding to our vnderstanding. When he sayth he shall be called least, is an allusion to that was sayd before of the commaundementes, but the meaning is euident, they that bring the doctrine of the law into contempt, yea though it bee but in one sillable, shall be reiected as the worst sort of men. The kingdome of heauen is taken for the renouatiō of the Church, or the second state of the Church as it then began to rise by the preaching of the Gospel. So in Luke 7. 28 Christ accounteth him that is least in the kingdome of God, greater then John: the reason of the speech is, because God restoring the worlde by the hande of his sonne, framed his kingdome perfectly. Therefore Christe will not that any teachers bee admitted into his Church after the same bee renewed, but such as are saythfull interpreters of the law, and will endeouour to keepe the doctrine of the same sound. But it is demanded whether the ceremonies were accounted amongst the commaundementes of God, which are not required now to be obserued. I answer, the purpose and the end of the lawgiuer is to be considered. For God commaunded the ceremonies, that the outward vse of them might be temporall, and the signification eternall: he breaketh not the ceremonies, that holdeth the effect of them, and omitteth the shadow. Now sith Christe banisheth them out of his kingdome, which accustome menne to the contempt of his law: their beastlinesse is monstrous, that are not ashamed with sacrilegious indulgence, to remit that which God doth so seuerely require, & vnder pretence of a venial sinne to beat downe the righteousness of the law. Again that title is to be noted which he giueth to good and holy teachers, that is, to such as exhort men not only in words, but especially in example of life to keepe the law.

Matth 5.

20. For I saye vnto you, except your righteousness exceede the righteousness of the Scribes & Pharisee, yee shall not enter into the kingdome of heauen.

21. Yee haue heard that it was sayde to them of the old time. Thou shalt not kill: for who soeuer killeth shall be culpable of iudgement.

22. But I saye vnto you, who soeuer is angrye with his brother vnadvisedly, shall bee culpable of iudgement. And who soeuer saith to his brother, Racha, shall be worthy to be punished by the counsell: & who soeuer shall say, Foole, shall be worthy to be punished with hell fire.

Marke.

Luke.

20. Except your righteousness esse excede. He reprehendeth the Scribes, which endeououred to charge the doctrine of the Gospel, as though it were the ouerthrowe of the lawe. Hee disputeth not this matter, but onely dooth shewe briefly that they haue nothing lesse in their mindes, then the zeale

of the lawe : as if hee shoulde haue sayde, they pretend that they hate mee, because they would not breake the lawe, but it appeareth by their life how coldly they esteeme the law, nay how securely they scorne at God, while that with a painted and faigned righteousness they beare vppon themselves amongst men. This is the iudgement of most of the interpreters. But see if hee doe not rather reprocue the corrupt kind of teaching, which the Scribes and Pharisees vsed in teaching the people. For when as they restrayned the law of G O D onely to outward duties, they framed their disciples as Apes to hypocrisie. And I speake not against it, that they liued as wickedly, nay worse then they taught. Therefore I doe willingly ioyne their glory of false righteousness with their wicked doctrine : yet it doth easily appeare by those wordes that follow (what it is that Christ doth especially inueigh against in this sentence) where as hee purging the lawe from their wicked commentes, doeth restore the same to his former puritie. In summe, that which was wickedly objected, (as wee haue sayde) against him, he forcibly returneth backe vppon themselves. Behold, sayd hee, how perfect and apt interpreters of the lawe they are : for they doe frame a righteousness which shall shutte the gate of heauen against the followers of it. It must be remembred, that wee sayde other where, that for the amplifying of the matter, the Pharisees are ioynd to the Scribes : because that secte had got the reporte of holinesse to themselves before all others. Though they are deceived that thinke they are so called of a separation, as menne separate from the common sorte of menne, they challenge a degree propper to themselves. For they were called *Phariseim*, that is interpreters : because that they not contente with the simple letter, professed that they had the keye, to gather the secreete vnderstanding : whereof their great heape of mixed inuentions sprang, when as they drawing the maistershippe to themselves with a wicked pleasure and like boldnes they durst intrude their owne inuentions in stead of the scripture.

21. *You haue heard what was sayde.* This sentence and others following doth agree with that, that goeth before. For Christ dooth more at large shewe in their kindes how ouerthwartly they doe wrest the lawe, so that their righteousness is nothing els but dross. But they are deceived that thought, that this was the reformation of the law, & that Christ extolled his disciples into higher degree of perfection, then Moses euer could bring his grosse and carnall people vnto, which was hardly fitt to learne the first elementes. So went the opinion, the beginning of righteousness was in times past deliuered in the lawe, but that the perfection is taught in the Gospell.

But Christ ment nothing lesse, then to chaunge or alter any thing in the commandements. For God hath therein once established a perfect rule of life, where of he will neuer repent. But because that the law was corrupted with adulterous commentes, and was wrested into a prophane sence, Christ deliuereth the same from such corruptions, and sheweth the right vnderstanding of it, fro the which the Iewes were fallen away. And the doctrine of the lawe doth not onely beginne, but also performeth an vpright life : as may be gathered out of this one Chapter, in that it requireth a perfect loue of G O D and our neighbour : so that hee which is endued with such a loue, wanteth nothing of the

the cheife perfection. Therefore the lawe, by the commaundements of good life, leadeth men to the marke of righteousness. Therefore Paule accounteth it weake, not in respect of it selfe, but in respect of our flesh. For if the law did onely giue an entrance to true and perfect righteousness, then was Moles protestation in vaine: I take heauen and earth to record this day against you, that I haue set before thee the way of life and death. Againe, and nowe O Israell, what doth the Lord thy GOD require of thee, but that thou shouldest wholly cleaue vnto him. This promise were also in vaine, and to no purpose, hee that doth these things shall liue in them. And it evidently appeareth out of other places of scripture, that Christ meant not to alter any thing in the commaundements. For he commaundeth them, that woulde through their good workes enter into life, to obserue nothing but the commaundements of the lawe: and neyther hee nor his Apostles doe giue any other precepts of godly & holy life. And truly they do great iniurie to God the authour of the law, which imagine that hee did onely frame the eyes, hands, and feete to a feigned thewe of good workes, and that onely the Gospell teacheth vs to loue God from the hearte. Therefore let that error passe, that the wants of the law are here amended by Christ: for we may not imagine Christ to be a new law giuer, to adde any thing to the eternall righteousness of his father: but as a faithfull interpreter he is to be heard, that we might know, what maner of law it is, to what purpose it tendeth and how farre it reacheth.

Deu. 30. 19
Deu. 10. 12

Leuit. 18. 5.

Now it remaineth for vs to see what Christ condemneth in the Pharises, and what his interpretation differeth from their commentes. The summe is, that they had translated the doctrine of the law to a politike order, as if it sufficed to doethe outward duties. So it came to passe, that hee thought himselfe free from manslaughter, that had not with his hande killed a man. And hee that had not defiled his body with adulterie, thought himselfe chaste & pure before God. But this profanation of the lawe might not be borne, when as it is certaine, that Moles did euery where require a spirituall worship of God: and God, who deliuered the same by the hand of Moles, according to his own nature spake as well to the hearts, as to the hands and eyes. Christ alleadgeth the wordes of the law, but he applyeth himselfe to the common capacitie of the simple, as if hee should say: the Scribes haue as yet deliuered vnto you, but a littrell exposition of the law: as if it were sufficient if a man keepe his handes from manslaughter and violence. But I admonish you to looke deeper into the matter: and because that charitie is the perfection of the lawe, I say that thy neighbour is iniured, as oft as any thing is vncharitably done against him. The last clause that he rehearseth, that he shall bee culpable of a iudgement that killeth a man, doth confirme that which I sayd euen now, that Christ reprocueth that fault: that the law of God, which was giuen to gouerne the minds of men, was turned into a politike gouernement.

22. But I say vnto you. He doth not oppose his answer against the commaundement of Moles, but against the common fantasie of the Scribes. Also because that the Pharises did boast of antiquitie (as commonly a long prescription of time is pretended for defence of errors) Christ calleth the people backe to his authoritie, whereto all antiquitie ought of right to giue place: wherby we gather that the truth is much more to be esteemed than either antiquitie or custome

Whose

Whosoever shall say vnto his brother. Christ setteth downe three degrees of condemnati on, besides the violence of the hands: whereby he declareth that that commandement of the law, doth not onely reſtraine the handes, but all affections contrary to brotherly charitie: as if hee ſhould haue ſayde, they that are onely angry with their brethren, or doe proudly liſt vp themſelues, or doe hurt them with any opprobrious words, are murderers.

Nowe ſith it is euident, that this worde *Racha* is placed in the middeſt betweene anger and manifeſt reproofe, I take it to be an interiection of contempt or deſpite. And though Chriſt adiudgeth them onely to hell fire, which break out into open reproofes, yet hee acquiteth not anger from this puniſhment: but alluding to the iudgements of the worlde, hee declareth that God will become iudge of that priuate and ſecret wrath, that hee may puniſh the ſame. And becauſe that hee proceedeth further, that ſheweth his indignation with bitter ſpeech, he ſayth, that he ſhall be found guiltie before a heavenly counſell, that hee may haue a greater puniſhment. And he adiudgeth them to hell fire, which breake out into reproches, ſignifying that hatred or whatſoever els is againſt charitie, ſufficeth to purchaſe the reward of eternall death, though no violence be offered. It is not to be doubted, but that this word *Gehenna* is borrowed: for with the Hebrewes it ſignifieth a valley. Alſo the valley of Hennon was an infamous place: becauſe of their deteſtable ſuperſtition, for that they there offered their children to Idolles. Hereof it came to paſſe, that holy men vſed that word for hell, that that vile vngodlines might be had in the greater deteſtation, that the people might abhorre that ſo deteſtable and horrible a name. And it appeareth that this manner of ſpeech was vſed in Chriſt his time, and hell was called almoſt by no other name then *Gehenna*, the word ſomewhat altered from the naturall ſound.

Mathew. 5.

23 If then thou bring thy gift to the altar, and there remembreſt that thy brother hath ought againſt thee.

24. Leauē there thine offering before the altar, and goe thy way: firſt, be reconciled to thy brother, and then come and offer thy gift

25. Agree with thine aduerſary quickly, whiles thou art in the way with him, leaſt thine aduerſary deliuer thee to the iudge, & the iudge deliuer thee to the ſergeant, and thou be caſt into priſon.

26. Verily I ſay vnto thee, thou ſhalt not come out thence, till thou haſt payde the vttermoſt farthing.

Marke.

Luke. 12.

58. Whileſt thou goeſt with thine aduerſarie to the ruler, as thou art in the way, giue diligence in the way, that thou mayſt be deliuered from him, leaſt hee bring thee to the iudge, and the iudge deliuer thee to the iaylor, and the iaylor caſt thee into priſon.

59: I tell thee, thou ſhalt not depart thence, till thou haſt payd the vtmoſt mite.

27. If thou bring thy gift. With this claue hee confirmeth and alſo expoundeth the former doctrine. The ſumme is, that wee doe then ſatisfie that commaundement of the lawe, wherein wee are forbidden to kill,

kill, if wee nourish agreement & brotherly loue with our neighbours. And that he might the better perswade vs to it, Christ pronounceth that euen the duties of religiō are not accepted of God, but refused of him, if we dissent amongst our selues. For in that he commandeth the, that haue hurt any one of their brethren, to be first in fauour with him, before that they offer their gift: he declareth that there is no entrance for vs vnto God, so long as through our fault wee are at enmitie with our neighbours. If that men pollute and corrupt with their hatreds their whole worshippe which they offer, we hereof gather how much he esteemeth mutuall concord amongst vs. Yet here may a question be moued, whe ther it be not absurde that the duties of charitie are more accounted of, the the worship of God. For we must say, that eyther the order of the law is preposterous, or els the first table should be preferred before the second.

This is easily answered: for the wordes of Christe doe tend to no other purpose, but to shewe that they doe in vayne and falsly professe themselves worshippers of G O D, which doe contemptuously despise their brethren, which they haue vniustly injured. For vnder this one kinde hee noteth all the exercises of religion by the figure *Synecdoche*: by which outwarde exercises men doe oft counterfeit holinesse, rather then truely testifie the same. And it is to bee noted that Christe, after the manner of that time, spake of the sacrifices. At this day our estate is vnlike: yet the same doctrine remaineth: that is, whatsoeuer we offer vnto God is corrupt, except we be at one with our brethren as much as lieth in vs.

The Scripture callt almes, Phillip. 4. 18. sacrifices of a sweete saueur: yet wee heare out of Paule his mouth, 1. Cor. 13. 2, 3. that hee that bestoweth all his goodes vppon the poore, is yet nothing, except he haue charitiy. Also God dooth not take nor acknowledge them for children, excepte they againe doe shew themselves to menne as brethren. And though Christe doe command them onely that haue injured their brethren, to apply the selues to appease them: yet vnder this one kinde he sheweth how precious brotherly concord is before God. And this setteth out much more, that he commandeth to leaue the gift before the altar, as if he should haue sayd: in vaine do menne come to the temple, or offer sacrifices to God, so long as they are at discord with their neighbours.

25. *Agree with thine aduersary.* Though Christe seemeth to goe further not onely to exhorte them to reconciliation, which haue done iniurie to their brethren, but them also which haue beene injured: yet I thinke that hee had a further regard: namely that he might cutte off all occasion of hatreds and discordes, and shew the meanes to maintaine good will: for from whence spring all iniuries, but that all menne are too carefull to holde their owne right: that is, they are giuen too much to maintaine their owne commoditie, with the losse of other men: For almost all menne are blinded with a pecuniſhe loue of themselves, so that they flatter themselves, euen in the worst causes. Therefore Christe, that he might preuent discordes, hattreds, strifes, and all iniuries, forbiddeth that selfe loue, and commandeth his disciples to bend themselves to moderation and equitie, that parting from the extremitie of their right, they might with such equity redeeme peace and friendship.

It were to bee wished, that there should neuer fall any strife or controuersie amongst vs : and surely men shoulde neuer fall into contention or strif, if there were such loue amongst them as ought to be . But because that it can hardly be brought to passe, but that some strife will arise, Christ sheweth a remedy how the same may presently bee ended, namely, if we bridle our lustes, & bee ready rather to passe it ouer with our losse, then to prosecute our right with an vnapeaseable rygor. But christ vseth this exhortation diuers times, as it appeareth out of the 12. of Luke, whereas the Sermon which he made in the mount is not set downe, but an epitome gathered of diuers sentences of Christ . Whereby it also appeareth what it is to be in the way: that is, before thou comest to the Iudge. *Least thine aduersary deliuer thee to the iudge.* Some expound this clause metaphorically, that the heauenly iudge will deale with extremitie of lawe, so that he will forgieue nothing at all, except that we endeouour to pacifie those contentions, which we haue with our neighbours. But I take it simply, that Christ admonisheth vs, that this is profitable for vs euen amongst men. For the couetous desire is often dangerous to the contentious. Yet I do not deny but that the similitude may be aptly applyed to God: that is, that hee shall feeble iudgement without mercy, that is rigorous to his brethren, or bendeth himselfe wholly to contention. But the Papistes are more then ridiculous, which by expounding this place allegorically, doe build their purgatory: but there is nothing more euident, then that Christ doth speake of maintaining good will amongst men. They make no religion without shame, to peruerse his wordes, and to draw them to a straunge sence, so that they might deceiue the vnlearned. But because they are vnworthy of any long confutation, I will shewe in one onely word, how shamefull their ignorance is. They imagine the aduersary to be the deuill, and that Christe commaundeth his faythfull ones to belong vnto him: therefore that the Papistes may finde out a purgatory, it behooueth them first to bee brethren and friendes to the diuell.

It is well knowne that a quarterne is the fourth parte of a pound, but in this place it is taken for a farthing, or any other small peece of money, as it also appeareth out of Luke. Now, if I would vse cauelles, I would here also refell the folly of the Papistes. For if hee that is once in purgatorie shall neuer goe out from thence, vntill he haue payd the vttermost farthing: it followeth that those rites, which they call the suffrages of the lyuing for the dead, are in vaine. For Christ doth not admit others to make satisfaction for the release of the debtor, but expressly requireth of euery man the payment of his owne debt. If then their Masses and other sacrifices be vnprofitable, how hotely soeuer their fire of purgatory doe burne, yet their Priestes and Monkes kitchens shall waxe cold: for which cause they haue so painefully striven for the same.

Matth. 5.

37. Yee haue hearde that it was sayde to them
of olde time, Thou shalt not commit adultery.

28. But I saye vnto you, that whosoever looketh

Marke.

Luke.

on a woman to lust after her, hath committed adulterie with her already in his heart.

29. Wherefore if thy right eye cause thee to offend, plucke it out, and cast it from thee: for it is better for thee, that one of thy members perish, then that thy whole bodie should be cast into hell.

30. Also if thy right hand make thee to offend, cut it off, and cast it from thee: for better it is for thee, that one of thy members perish, then that thy whole body should be cast into hell.

27. Thou shalt not commit adulterie. Christ proceedeth in his disputation, proving that the law of God is not only a gouernour of life, to frame the outward behauiour after a politike manner: but it also requireth the perfect and whole affections of the heart. But that must be remembered, which I gaue warning of before. Although Christ reporteth the words of the law, yet it is the grosse and adulterous sense, which false interpreters had gathered, that he reproveth: for he had sayd before, that he came not to bee a newe lawgiuer, but a faithfull interpreter of the law already giuen. And for that it might be objected, that that interpretation had continued long, Christ expressly granteth it: but after this maner he answereth it, that the long continuance of errorr ought to be no preiudice to the truth.

28. Hee that looketh vpon a woman. The purpose of Christe is generally to condemne the lust of the flesh. Therefore he sayth that they are adulterers before God, not only that defile other mens wiues, but they also that pollute their eyes with an vnchaste looke. But it is a figuratiue kinde of speech, because that not onely the eyes doe make men guiltie of adulterie, but also the blind burning lustes of the heart. Therefore Paul placeth chastitie in the body and the spirite, 1. Cor. 7. 34. But Christ thought it sufficient to confute that grosse opinion, which had taken place: because that they did thinke that they shoulde auoyd nothing but outward adulterie. Notwithstanding, because the eyes, for the most part, procure the mindes to such filthy deuises, and lust entred as it were by these doores. Christ vseth this maner of speech, when as he would condemn concupiscence, and that may easily be gathered by that word lust: wher by we are also taught, that not they only are to be accounted adulterers, which conceiue whoredome in their mindes with full consent: but they also that admit any pricks or motions of the same. Wherefore the hypocrisie of the Papistes is too grosse and carelesse, which denie concupiscence to be sinne, vntill the whole heart doe yeeld consent. But it is not to be maruailed at, that they lessen sinne as they doe, when as it behooueth them to be dull and slow in accounting of their sinnes, which ascribe righteousness to the deserts of their workes.

29. If thine eye. Because in the weakenesse and imbecillitie of the flesh, CHRIST might seeme to vrgen men too seuerely, hee preuenteth and answereth all those complaints. In summe hee declareth, though that bee harde, difficult, troublesome, or sharpe, which God commmandeth: yet we can make no excuse thereby: because that the righteousness of God ought to be
more

more esteemed of vs, then all other things which are most deare and precious to vs. As if he should haue sayd, there is no cause why thou shouldst obiect to me, that thou canst scarcely turne thine eye hether and thither: but that they are caught in snares before thou art aware. For thou must rather forsake and leaue thine eyes then to depart from the commandementes of GOD. Yet it is not Christes meaning that the body should be lamed, that we might obey GOD. But because that all men doe gladly desire that their senses may not be so yamed, that they may haue the free vse of them, Christ doth hyperbolically teach vs to cut away any thing that hindreth vs from that obedience vnto God, which hee requireth of vs in his law. And this he doth of purpose, because that men do in this behalfe too licentiously nourish vp themselves. If the mind were pure, the eyes and hands would also bee obedient, which haue no proper motion of their owne. But we doe herein offend greiuously, that wee are not so carefull as wee ought to be in auoyding deceitfull baits, so that rather with an vnbridled libertie wee doe willingly prouoke our selues to euill.

Matth. 5

31. It hath bene sayd also, whofoener shall put away his wife, let him giue her a testimony all of diuorcement.

32. But I say vnto you, whofoener shall put away his wife (except it be for fornication) can send her to commit adultery: & whofoener shall marry her, that is diuorced, committeth adultery.

Marke.

Luke 16.

18 Whofoener putteth away his wife, and marieth another committeth adultery. & whofoener marieth her that is put away from her husband, committeth adultery.

31. Whofoener shall put away. Because there will be a more conuenient place to entreate of this doctrine more at large in the 19. after Mathew: I will nowe breifly touch that which Christ sayth heere. As the Iewes did falsly thinke that they had done their dutie towards God, if after a politike sort, they had obserued the law: so againe they fondly imagined that it was lawfull for them to do whatsoeuer the politike law did not forbid.

The diuorcements which they were wont to make their wiues Moses had not forbidden, in respect of an outwarde order: but onely for restraint of lust hee had commaunded to giue a bil of diuorcement to those wiues that were put away. And it was a certaine testimonie of inanumission, that the woman might after be free from the yoke and power of her husband. And the husband did also confesse that hee did not put away his wife for any faulte, but because hee did not like her. From hence sprang that errour, that they thought no faulte to bee in such a diuorcement: so that they satisfied the law: but they tooke a very wrong rule of a godly and holy life, out of the ciuill law. For the politike lawes are sometime bent to mens manners: but GOD in giuing a spirituall law did not regarde what men coulde doe, but what they ought to doe. Therefore a perfect and vpright righteousnesse is therein contayned, though wee haue no power to fulfill the same. So Christ doth admonish vs that that is not presently lawfull before GOD, which the politike lawe of

Moses

Moses doth tolerate. He saith, that vnder the pretence of the law, he absolueth himselfe, that putting away his wife, giueth her a bill of diuorcement. But the bande of Matrimonie is holier, then that it may bee broken and vnknit at the will, or rather pleasure of men. For though man and wife do ioyne themselues together with a mutuall consent: yet God doth ioyne them and knit them together in such a knot, that cannot be dissolued, that after it is not lawfull for them to depart. Yet he putteth an exception, except it bee for fornication. For that woman is worthily put away, which hath traierously broken matrimonie: for the band being broken through her fault, the man is set at libertie.

32. *Causeth her to commit adultery.* Because the bill of diuorcement did permit, that the woman so seperated, might enter into new mariages, hee is worthily condemned as a baud or a betrayer, that against all law and right, casteth off his wife to others, which was giuen to him of God.

Mathew 5.

Marke

Luke.

33. *Againe, ye haue heard that it was sayde to them of old time, Thou shalt not forswear thy selfe, but shalt performe thine oathes to the Lord*

34. *But I say vnto you, sweare not at all, neyther by heauen: for it is the thron of God:*

35. *Nor yet by the earth: for it is his footstool: neither by Ierusalem: for it is the citie of the great king,*

36. *Neyther shalt thou sweare by thine head: because thou canst not make one hayre white or blacke.*

37. *But let your communication bee yea, yea: nay, nay: for whatsoeuer is more then these, commeth of euill.*

33. *Thou shalt not forswear thy selfe.* This also is not a reproofe of the lawe, but rather a true interpretation of the same: for GOD hath not onely condemned in the law all periuries but vaine and light swearing, which derogateth from the maiestie of his name. For not onely he doth take the name of God in vaine, that sweareth falsly, but he that vseth the name of God in frivolous matters, or rashly and contemptuously in common speach. Further, when as the law of God condemneth euery prophaning of the name of GOD the Iewes did imagine the fault to be onely periuries. Christe reprooueth this grosse error, that they thought it lawfull for them to abuse the name of GOD without reproofe: so that they were not forsworne. It is commanded that we should religiously performe our oathes to God. For he that doth defraude and deceiue his neighbours after that he hath vsed the name of God for it, doth injury, not to men onely, but to God. But the fault is in restraining that to one point, which extendeth more largely. Some apply this word *performe*, to vowes promised to God for religions sake. But the word doth best agree to all covenants and promises confirmed by adding the name of God thereto: for then is God made a witness between both parties, to whom they pledge their faith.

M

34. *Swear*

34. *Swear not at all.* This clause, *not at all*, hath deceived many: so that they thought that Christ had generally condoned all oathes. And many good men were driuen to this vnmeasurable rigor, through the vnbrideled libertie of swearing, which they saw abound throughout the world. And the Anabaptistes vnder this pretence haue kept a great stirre, as though Christ would suffer vs to sweare for no cause, for that hee forbiddeth to sweare at all. But we must not fetch an exposition out of any other place, then out of the wordes of the text: presently there followeth, neyther by heauen, nor by the earth. Who seeth not that these kindes of oathes are set downe for interpretation sake, which, by this numbring of these particuler oathes, might interpret the former sentence? The Iewes had certaine extraordinary or indirect (as men say) maner of oathes: and when they swore by heauen, earth, or the altar, they counted this almost for nothing. And as one sinne ariseth of an other, so vnder this colour they faigned, that they did not so openly prophane the name of God. Christ, that he might meete with this sinne, sayth, that they may not at all sweare, eyther after this maner, or after that, neyther by heauen, nor by the earth, &c. Whereby wee gather that this phrase (not at all) is not referred to the substance, but to the maner of swearing: as if he should haue sayd, neither directly nor indirectly: otherwise it were in vaine to rehearse these kindes. Wherefore the Anabaptistes doe shew their grosse ignorance, and their delight in contention, while that frowardly they enforce one word, and with closed eyes do passe by the whole meaning of the sentence. If any object that Christ permiteth no oath: I answer that the interpreters words must be vnderstoode according to the meaning of the law. Therefore this is the summe that the name of God is taken in vaine other waies then by periurie. Therefore we must refrain from all superfluous oathes: but whereas there is cause, the lawe doeth not onely permit, but also commandeth to sweare. So Christes meaning was nothing else, then that all those oathes are vnlawfull, which by any abuse prophane the sacred name of God, the reuerence whereof they ought to preserue.

Neyther by heauen. They are deceived that say, that Christe reprooued these formes of swearing, as corrupt, because that GOD alone shoulde bee sworne by: for the reasons which hee bringeth doe rather bend to the contrary parte: because that then also the name of God is sworne by, when as heauen and earth are named because there is no part of the worlde, wherein GOD hath not imprinted some note of his glory. Yet this opinion seemeth not to agree with the commandement of the lawe, where as God expressly commandeth to sweare by his name, nor yet with diuerse places of the Scripture, whereas hee complayneth, that hee is iniured so ofte, as his creatures are sworne by. I answer it is an offence like to idolatrie, when as eyther the power of iudgement, or the authoritie of trying witnesses is giuen to them. For wee must consider the ende of swearing: namely, that men doe appeale vnto God, as the reuenger of periurie, and the defence of trueth. And this honor cannot bee giuen to an other, but that his maiestie shall be prophaned. And for this cause the Apostle sayth, that one cannot sweare, but by the greater: & this was peculiar to God alone, that hee sweareth by himselfe. So whosoever swore in times past by Moloch or by any other Idoll, did so much diminish

from

from the glory of God, in that another was placed in his rounth, as vnderstander of the thoughtes, & iudge against their soules. And they that at this day doe swear by angels or dead Saints, do spoyle God of his honor, & doe ascribe a vain godhead to those creatures. But there is an other thing to be considered, when as heauen & earth are sworne by, in respect of the maker. For the religion of an oath is not setled vpon the creatures: but God alone is called to witnes, they being brought forth as seales of his glory. The scripture also calleth heauē, the seat of God, not that he is included therein, but that men might learne to lift their mindes on high, so oft as they thinke on him, and that they should not imagine any carthly or base thing of him. Yea, the earth also is therefore called his footstool, that we might know that he being euery where, could not be contained in any certaine place. The holinesse of Hierusalem did depend of the promise: therfore it was holy, because the Lord had chosen it for the seate and pallace of his Empyre. When men swear by their head, they lay their life as pledge of their good meaning, which is their singular gift of God.

37. But let your communication bee. Secondly, Christe prescribeth a remedy: namely, that menne should deale truly and faithfully amongst themselves: for then playne speech shall be of more value, then an oath is amongst them, that knowe no other but corrupt and false dealing. And truly this is the best way to reprove & correct vices by, to note the fountaines from whence they spring. From whence cometh this rash readinesse of swearing, but that in so much vanitie, in so many deccites, vnconstancy and sicklenesse, nothing almost is beleued? Therefore Christe requireth truth and constancie in our wordes, that we should not neede to sweare any more. For, the repetition aswell of the affirmation, as of the denyall, is for this purpose, that wee should keepe our promises, that all vpight dealing may appeare. And because that this is the true and lawfull kind of bargayning, where men speake no otherwise with their tongue, then they thinke in their heart, Christ sayth that whatsoeuer is more, proceedeth of euill.

And I allow not their iudgement, that attribute the fault of swearing to him, that doth not beleue the speaker. But in my iudgement Christe teacheth, that it proceedeth of the vices of men, that they are enforced to sweare: for if there were vpight dealing amongst them, if they were not diuerse nor inconstant of their worde, but maintained that simplicitie, which nature teacheth: yet it followeth not but that it is lawfull to sweare, so oft as need requireth; for many things may be well vsed, which rise of an ill beginning.

Matth. 5.

Marke.

Luke, 6.

38. Ye haue heard that it hath bene sayde, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.

39. But I say vnto you, resist not euill: but whosoener shall smite

29. And to him that smiteth thee on the one cheeke, offer also the other: and him that taketh away thy cloake, forbid not to take

smite thee on thy right cheeke, turne to him the other also.

40. And if any one will sue thee at the lawe, and take away thy coate, let him haue thy cloake also.

41. And whosoever will compell thee to goe a mile, goe with him twaine.

take thy coate also.

30. Giue to euery manne that asketh of thee: and of him that taketh away thy goodes ask them not againe.

38. *An eye for an eye.* Here is an other fault reproofed, that whereas God had by his law commaundered the Iudges and magistrates to reuenging iniuries with like punishment, euery man vnder that pretence woulde reuenge themselves. Therefore they thought they did not offend, so that they did not first prouoke any: but being iniured, did recompence like for like.

But Christe teacheth vs otherwise, though the Iudges are commaundered to defend all menne, and are ordayned reuengers to bridle the wicked, and to restrayne their violence: yet euery one ought patiently to suffer the iniuries done vnto them.

39. *Resist not euill.* There is two wayes of resisting: the one, when as without daunger we driue away iniuries: the other, when wee recompence like for like. But though Christ permitteth not his, to repell violence with violence: yet he forbiddeth not them to withstand vniust violence. And Paule can interpret vs this place best, when hee commaundeth vs to ouercome euill with good, rather then to strue with euill doing, Ro. 12. 17. For the Antithesis is to be noted betweene an offence and the correction of a fault. Here he speaketh of reuengement: & Christ, that he might take that liberty from his disciples forbiddeth them to resist euill with euill. And also he stretcheth the lawe of patience further, that we should not receiue iniuries without grudging, but rather prepare our selues to beare new iniuries. In sum, this is the purpose of this admonition, that the faithful should learne to forget what mischiefes foeuer are don vnto the, least that when they are hurt, they breake into hatred or enuy, or desire to hurt againe: but that they should frame themselves to a greater patience, if that mischiefes & iniuries should increase and stirre vp more and more.

Whosoever shall strike thee. Iulianus and such like did wickedly cauill at the doctrine of Christe, as if it did vtterly ouerthrow all lawes and iudgements. For as Augustine sayd very aptly and wisely in his first Epistle, The counsell of our Saviour was for no other purpose, then to frame the mindes of the faythfull to a moderation and equitie, that for one or two iniuries they should not faynte nor waxe weary. And it is true that Augustine sayth, the law is not giuen for outward workes, if thou vnderstand them rightly.

I graunt that Christ restrayneth our handes as well as our mindes: but whereas a manne cannot defend himselfe and his, from iniuries, without reuenge, the wordes of Christ let not, but that lawfully, and without offence he may auoyde the daunger coming. Certainly Christ would not teach his disciples to whet the mallice of the wicked, which burnt too hotte before with a delight to injury them.

And

And to turne the other cheek, what were it else, but a prouocation to further mischeife? Therefore it is not meete nor conuenient for an interpreter to stand vpon the syllables, but to mark the purpose of him that speaketh. And there is nothing more vncomely for Christs disciples then to play and cauil with the wordes, whereas the meaning of their maister is plaine. And it is not hard to vnderstand what Christes purpose is: namely that the end of one trouble is the beginning of an other. and so the faithfull must through the whole course of their life, with continuall steppes passe through many iniuries. Therefore when they are once hurt, he would by that instruction frame them to bearing, that by suffering they might learne to be patient.

40. *And if any will sue thee.* Christe toucheth the other faulte, which is when the wicked disturbe vs with suites. And in this behalfe he also commandeth vs to haue our mindes so armed to patience, that our coate being taken away, wee should be readie to giue our cloake also. It shall be but folly for any man to stande vpon wordes. First, to giue vnto the enemies whatsoeuer they desire, rather then to goe to lawe with them: For such a facilitie were as a fan, to kindle the mindes of the wicked to thestes and robberies, from the which wee knowe Christ his minde was farre. Then what meaneth this, that thou shouldst giue cloake to him that vnder colour of the lawe, would take away thy coate? That is, if any man oppressed with wrongfull iudgement looseth that which is his, and yet is ready to leaue the rest, if neede be, deserueth no lesse prayse of patience, then he that suffereth himselfe to be twise spoyled, before he will goe to law.

Therefore the meaning is, that Christians, when any attempt to spoyle them of parte of their goods should be readie to be wholly spoyled. Hereby we gather, that they are not altogether secluded from iudgements, if they at any time haue place giuen them of iust defence: for though they lay not forth their goods to the spoyle: yet they goe not from this doctrine of Christ, which perswadeth them to beare oppression with patience. Truly it is a rare example, that any man should come to sue in the court with quiet and patient affection. But because it may be that one may defend a good cause not in respect of his owne priuate commoditie, but for the common wealth, it is not lawfull simply to condemn the thing it selfe, vntil the corrupt affection doth appeare. The diuerse phrases in Mattheue and Luke, doe not alter the sense. A cloake is commonly of greater value then a coate: therefore when Mathew sayth that thou must giue thy cloake to him that taketh away thy coate, he meaneth, that when we haue a small losse, we should be willing and ready to beare a greater losse. But the wordes of Luke doe agree with the olde prouerbe, my coate is nearer then my cloake.

LUKE. 30. *To euery one that asketh, giue.* Mattheue hath the same wordes, as wee shall see shortly after. For it may easily bee gathered by the text, that Luke doeth not speake heere of them, that by entreatie and prayers doe seeke for helpe: but of the contentions and violence, which the wicked vse in taking away other mennes goodes. Aske not againe, sayeth hee, of him, that taketh away thy goodes. Yet, if any man hadde rather reade these two sentences asunder, there is no difference in this matter, and so it is

an exhortation to bee ready and willing to giue . As concerning the seconde clause, where Christ forbiddeth to demaund againe those things, which were vniustly taken away, is vndoubtedly an exposition of the former doctrine. that is, that we should not take greiuously the losse of our goods. But that must not be forgotten, which I spake of euen now, that the wordes are not to be vtged sophistically, as though it were not lawfull for a godly man, to recouer againe that, which is his, if at any time God shall giue him a iust remedie : but onely prescribeth to vs a law of patience, but that wee should patiently waite, vntill the Lord himselfe shall take an account of those spoyling theeues.

Mathew. 5.

Marke.

: Luke. 6.

42. *Giue vnto him that asketh, and from him that would borrow of thee, turne not away.*

34. *And if yee lend to them, of whom yee hope to receiue, what thanks shall yee haue? for euen the sinners lend to sinners, to receiue the like.*

35. *Lend, looking for nothing againe. and your reward shall bee great.*

42. *To him that asketh.* Though the wordes of Christ, reported by Mathew, do sound, as if he commaunded to giue to all, without respect or choyse: yet wee may gather an other meaning out of Luke, who setteth out the whole matter more fully. First, it is certaine that the purpose of Christ was to frame his disciples to be liberall rather then prodigall? But it were fond prodigalitie rashly to consume those things, which the Lord hath giuen. Further, wee see what a rule of charitie the holy Ghost hath deliuered other where. Therefore let vs hold this, that Christ doth exhort his disciples heere : first, that they bee liberall and charitable. Further this is the maner that he prescribeth them, that they should not thinke that they had done their dutie, when they had holpen some few, but that they should endeour to helpe all with their liberalitie, and that they should neuer be wearie, while that the Lord doth giue them abilitie. Further, that no man cauill at the wordes of Mathew, let vs conferre them with Lukes wordes. Christ sayth that we doe no dutie to God, while that in lending or doing other duties wee looke for any reward againe : and so hee maketh a distinction betwene charitie and carnall friendship. For prohaue men do loue together not frankly, but with an affection of reward and gaine : and so it cometh to passe, that euery man, in that he loueth others, doth seeke to be beloved himselfe, euen as Plato also doth wisely weigh the same. But Christ requirith of his Disciples charitie, without hope of gaine, that they should endeour to helpe the poore, from whom there is no hope to haue ought againe . Now wee see what it is to beare an open hand for them that aske : namely, to bee liberally minded towards all that neede our helpe, & which cannot recompence the benefit they receiue.

L V K E. 35. *Lend:* This sentence was corruptly restrained, as if that in this place Christe did not onely forbidde his to commit vsury : But. this hath

hath a further meaning, as it appeareth out of the former sentence. For after that Christ had declared what the wicked are wont to doe: that is, that they doe loue their friends, and helpe them, of whom they hope for some recompence, and they lend to them that are like themselues, that they may receiue the like againe. He addeth, what he requireth of his disciples more then this: namely, that they should loue their enemies, that they should freely do good & freely lend. Nowe wee see that this clause, *looking for nothing*, is corruptly vnderstood of vsury to be so particularly applyed: when as Christe onely exhorteth his to mutuall offices of charitie, and sayth, that the hyrelings shall haue no fauour before God: not that hee simply condemneth those benefices, which are done with hope of recompence: but he teacheth that it maketh nothing to testifie their charitie: because that he only is accounted liberal towards his neighbours, which helpeth them without any respecte of his owne commoditie, but hath onely regard of the neede of them that he helpeth, But whether it be lawfull for Christians sometime to take some gayne of that which is lente, I will not dispute heere at large, least of a corrupte sense, I should moue a question out of time (which I nowe confuted:) for I shewed euen now, that Christe ment nothing else, then that the saythfull should exceede the prophane men in lending: that is, that they should maintaine free liberality.

Matth. 5.

Marke.

Luke 6.

43. Yee haue heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt loue thy neighbour and hate thine enemy.

44. But I saye vnto you, loue your enemies: blesse them that curse you: doe good to them, that hate you, and praye for them, that hurte you, and persecute you.

44. That yee may bee the children of your fasher, which is in heauen: for he maketh his sunne to arise on the euil and the good, and sendeth raine to the iust and vniust.

45. For if yee loue them, which loue you, what reward shall ye haue? Doe not the Publicans euen the same?

47. And if yee bee friendly to your brethren onely, what singular thing doe you? do not euen the Publicans likewise.

48. Yee shall therefore bee perfect, as your fasher which is in heauen is perfect.

27. But I saye to you which heare. Loue your enemies, do well to them, which hate you.

28. Blesse them, which curse you, and pray for them, which hurt you.

And a little after.

32. For if yee loue them, which loue you, what thank shall you haue? for euen the sinners loue those, that loue them.

33. And if yee doe good for them, which doe good for you, what thanks shall yee haue: for euen the sinners doe the same.

And a little after.

35. Wherefore loue you your enemies, and ye shall be the children of the most high: for he is kind vnto the vnkind, and to the euill.

36. Bee yee therefore mercifull, as your fasher is mercifull.

43. *Thou shalt loue thy neighbour.* It is wonderfull that the Scribes were fallen to that absurditie, that they restrayned the name of neighbour to their welwillers, when as nothing is more manifest nor more certaine, the that God meaneth all mankind, when he speaketh of our neighbours. For because that euery man is addicted to himselfe, so oft as some priuate commodities doe seperate some men from others, that mutuall communication is lost, which nature it selfe doth teach. Therefore God, that he might keepe vs within the band of brotherly loue, he testifieth, that all they that are men, are our neighbours, for that common nature doth tie them to vs. For so oft as I looke vpon man, it is necessary that I should behold my selfe as in a glas: because that he is my bone and my flesh. And though the greater part most commonly doth seperate it selfe from that holy society: yet the order of nature is not violated through their wickednes: because that God is to be considered the authour of the fellowshippe. Whereby wee gather that the commaundement of the lawe is generall, which commaundeth vs to loue our neighbour. But the Scribes esteeming neighbourhood according to euery mans minde, will haue none to bee accounted neighbours, but they that through their desertes were worthy to be beloued, or at the least, they that would deale friendly with them againe. And this did common sense teach them: and therefore the children of the world were neuer ashamed to professe their hatredes, wherefore they could yeelde any account. But charity, which God commendeth in his law, regardeth not what euery manne deserueth, but stretcheth out it selfe to the vnworthy, to the peruerse and to the vnthankfull. But Christ restoreth this to the naturall sense, & deliuereth it from corruption: whereby that also appeareth that I sayd before, that Christ did not make new lawes: but only reprove the corrupt comments of the Scribes, where-with the puritie of the law of God had bene corrupted.

44. *Loue your enemies.* This one point containeth in it all the former doctrine, For whosoever can frame his mind to loue his enemies, will easily temper himselfe from all reuenge, & wil be patient in afflictio: but much more ready to help those that be in misery. Further christ in a few words sheweth the way & maner of fulfilling this comandement Loue thy neighbour as thy self. For he shall neuer satisfie this comandement that banisheth not the loue of himselfe, or rather deny himselfe, & so make much of those men, which God hath ioyned to him, that he goeth on to loue euen those, of whom he is hated. And by these wordes we learne, how far the faithfull ought to be from reuenge, wherein they are not onely forbidden to aske of God, but so to remitte and wholly to put out of their minds so that they shall wish well to their enemies, yet in the meane while they cease not to commit their cause to God, vntill he take vengeance of the reprobate. For they desire as much as lyeth in them, that the wicked should returne to a perfect mind, & so they seeke for their saluatio, that they should not perish. Yet with this comfort they ease all their troubles, that they doubt not, but that God will be a reuenger of that obstinate malice, that he might declare that hee hadde a care of the innocent. This is a very hard thing, & altogether against the nature of fleshe, to recompence good for euill: but wee must not seeke any excuse out of our faultes or infirmities, but wee must rather simply seeke what the lawe of charitie requireth, that wee vsing the power of the heavenly spirit,

and

and that by striving we might overcome what affections in vs were contrary to the same. This was the cause why the Monkes and such like rables imagined that these were counsellors and not preceptes, because that they measured what was due to GOD and to his lawe, by the ballance of mannes strength. And yet the monkes were not ashamed to challenge to themselves a perfection, because they did voluntarily bind themselves to observe his counsellors, and howe faithfully they performe the same which they doe onely vsurpe in woordes, I doe now omit to saye. And howe preposterous and fowle a deuice it is of counsellors, doeth hereof appeare. First, because it cannot be sayd without iniury to Christ, that hee counselled his disciples, and did not according to his authority commaund that which was right. Then it is more then folly to set the duties of charity at such liberty, which depend vpon the lawe. Thirdly, that woord, *I say to you*, signifieth in this place as much as to denounce or to commaunde, which they haue corruptly expounded to counsell. Lastly, that he expressly establisheth it as a thing necessarily to be done, is easily proued by Christes woordes, while he presently addeth,

45. *That you may be the children of your father.* When he expressly sayth that no manne can be otherwise the child of God, except hee loue them that hate him, who now dareth say that we are not bound to observe this doctrine? For it is as much as if he should haue sayd: who soeuer will bee accounted a Christian, let him loue his enemies: surely it is a horrible monster that the world in three or foure ages should be so ouerwhelmed with thicke darkenesse, that it could not see that to bee expressly commaunded, which who soeuer neglecteth, hee is wiped out from among the number of the children of God. Further it is to be noted that he proposeth not the exāple of God to be followed, as though that what soeuer he did, became vs. For he punisheth the vnthankfull, and often driueth the wicked out of the world, in which respect he proposeth not himselfe for vs to follow: for the iudgement of the world belongeth not to vs, but is proper to him: but he woulde that wee should bee followers of his fatherly goodnesse and liberality. And not onely the prophane philosophers did see that, but some of the most wicked contemners of godlinesse could make this confession, we are in nothing more like to God then in being liberall. In summe, Christ witnesseth that this is a note of our adoption, if we doe good to the euill and to them that are vnworthy. Yet thou must not vnderstande that we by this liberality are made the children of God, but because the same spirit (which is the witness, earnest, and seale of our free adoption) doeth reforme the wicked affections of the flesh, which strue against charitie. Christ proueth of the effecte that none else are the children of God, but they which shew it in gentlenesse and clemency. And for that phrase Luke sayth, *ye shall bee the children of the most high*: Not that any manne getteth this honour to himselfe, or that he then beginneth to be the sonne of God, when that he loueth his enemies: but because it is the accustomed manner of speaking in the scripture, to propose the benefites of the free grace of God in stead of reward, while that he would encourage vs to do well. And this is the reason, because he had regard to what end wee are called: namely, that the image of God being repayed in vs, we should liue holily and godly,

He maketh his sunne to rise. Hee rehearseth two testimonies of the goodnes of God towards vs, which are not only most known vnto men, but comon to all, when that rather sciencie it selfe should prouoke vs to performe the same one to another, though by the figure Synecdoche it comprehendeth many other like.

46. And do not the Publicans? Luke vseth in the same sense this word sinners: that is, mighty and wicked men: not that the office of it selfe was to be condemned: (for the Publicanes were gatherers of tolle, and as it is lawfull for Princes to set the taske, so is it lawfull to demaund & gather the same:) but because this maner of men was wont to be couetous and snatching, yea saythlesse and cruell: then because they were accounted amongst the Iewes as ministers of vniust tyrannie. Therefore if any man shall gather out of the words of Christ, that the Publicane were the worst of all men, he shall argue amisse, for he speaketh after the comon maner of speech: as if he should say, they that are almost without all humanity haue yet some kind of mutuall loue, while they seeke their owne commoditie.

48. Be yee therefore perfect. This perfection requireth not an equalitie, but is only referred to a likenesse. Therefore though we be far from God, we are accounted to be perfect as he is, while we bende to that marke, which he proposeth to vs in himselfe. If any interpret it otherwise, let there be made no comparison here between God and vs, but the perfection of God is called, first the free & mere liberality, which is done without accout of gaine, then, the singular goodnes which striueth with the malice & vnthankfulnes of men: The which appeareth by the words of Luke. *Be you mercifull as your heavenly father.* For mercie is opposed to bought loue, which is tied to a priuate commodity.

Matthew 6.

1. Take heede yee giue not your almes before men, to bee seene of them, or else yee shall haue no reward of your father which is in heauen.

Marke.

Luke.

2. Therefore when thou giuest thine almes, thou shalt not make a trumpet to be blowne before thee, as the hypocrites do in the Synagogues & in the stretes, to be prayesd of men. Verily I say vnto you they haue their reward.

3. But when thou doest thine almes, let not thy left hand know what thy right hand doeth.

4. That thine almes may be in secrete, & thy father that seeth in secrete, he will reward thee openly.

1. Take heede. Christe doeth in this place exhorthe his disciples to a syncre studie of good woorkes: that is, that they shoulde studie simply to doe well before GOD, and that they shoulde not boast themselues before menne. It is a most necessary admonition: because that in vertues ambition is alwayes to be feared, and there is no worke so laudable, that is not thereby often corrupted and defiled. But by the figure Synecdoche vnder this one kinde is there a generall doctrine deliuered: For he speaketh of almes no more then

then hee speaketh a little after of prayers. Yet in many copies the word *Righteousnes* is vsed for almes, as the olde interpreter also translated it. But that is of no waight, for both wayes it sufficiently appeareth, that hee correcteth this disease of ambition, whilst that in doing well, it seeketh glory of men.

2. *When thou giuest thine almes.* Here hee reproveth by name, the faulte which was commonly vsed and in custome, wherein the desire of vaine glory may not onely bee seene, but almost felt with the handes. For they emptied their baskets amongst the poore in the corners of the streetes, and in publike places where they vsed their publike meetings. In that they sought the publike places that they might haue many witnesses, shewed and appeared manifest, and vaine-glorious boasting: and not satisfied with that, they also vsed the sound of trumpets. They fained that they called the poore vnto them (as they neuer want pretences): yet nothing was more euident, then that they sought commendation and prayse. Further, when wee serue the eyes of men, wee then make not God the iudge and examiner of our life. Therefore Christ sayth not without cause, that they that boast themselves after this sort, haue their reward now already: for they cannot haue regard to God, that haue their eyes possessed with such vanitie. By the same reason all hypocrites are called couetous of vaine glory. For when hypocrites were called by prophane gesters which played counterfite persons vpon the stage and in playes the scripture giueth this name to men of a double and dissembling heart. Although there are diuers kindes of hypocrites. For some though they be most guiltie to themselves, yet most impudently they chalenge to be accounted for good men before the world and they endeavour to couer those faults whereof they are conuict in their own conscience. Others doe securely nourish vppon themselves, that they dare also chalenge vnto themselves a perfect righteoulnesse before God. Others do well, not for a desire of righteousnesse, nor for the glory of God, but onely that they may get themselves a fame and opinion of holinesse. Christ now noteth this latter kinde, and rightly calleth them hypocrites, which while in their good workes they propose themselves no good ende, they put the persons of others vpon them, that they might seeme holy and good worshippers of God.

3. *Let not thy left hand know.* The meaning of this speech is, that wee ought to be content that God alone is witnesse of our doings, and so to bend our selues in obedience to him, that wee bee not caried about with vanitie. For it falleth often out that men doe not sacrifice so much to GOD as to themselves. Therefore Christes meaning is that we should not be caried away with contrary thoughts, but wholly bend our selues to this, that wee may worshipspe with a pure conscience.

4. *That thine almes may be in secret.* This sentence seemeth contrary to many places of scripture, where wee are commanded to edifie our brethren with good examples. But if wee consider the purpose of our Sauiour, wee may not stretch the wordes any further. He commandeth his disciples, freely, and without all ambition to apply themselves to good workes. That this may be done, he willet them not to looke for the beholding of men that they may thinke it sufficient that God alone approve their deedes. But this simplicitie taketh not away the care and diligence of profiting others by our example.

And

And a little afore he doth not precisely forbid to do good deedes before men, but condemneth the vaine ostentation: *Thy father which seeth in secret.* Hee covertly condemneth the folly which reigneth euery wher amongst men, that they thinke their labour to be lost, if they haue not many witnessers of their good deedes. Therefore he sayth that God needeth not a great light to see & know their good deedes by: for hee knoweth euen those that seeme to bee buried in darkenesse. Therefore there is no cause why wee shoulde thinke those things lost which men see not, nor can beare witness of, because that God hath his seate euen in the darkeſt denes. And hee ministreth the aptest remedie for curing this disease of ambition, while hee calleth vs to the beholding of GOD, who maketh to vanish, and vtterly blotteth, all vaine glory out of our mindes. In the second clause which followeth next, Christ warneth vs in seeking for a reward of our good works, patiently to waite to the last day of the resurrection. Thy father, sayth he, shall rewarde thee openly: When? euen then when the morning of the last day shal arise, those things which are now hidden in darkenesse, shall be layd open.

Matthew. 6

Marke.

Luke

5. And when thou prayest, be not as the hypocrites: for they loue to stand, and pray in the Synagogues, & in the corners of the streetes, because they would be seene of men: verily I say vnto you, they haue their rewarde.

6. But when thou prayest, enter into thy chamber: and when thou hast shut thy doore, pray vnto thy Father which is in secrete, and thy father which seeth in secrete, shall rewarde thee openly.

7. Also when ye pray, vse no vaine repetitions as the heathen: for they think to be heard for their much babling.

8. Bee ye not like them therefore. for your father knoweth wherof ye haue neede, before ye aske of him.

5. When thou prayest. Hee teacheth nowe the same of prayers, which hee taught before of almes. And this is too grosse and shamefull prophaning of the name of GOD, that hypocrites pray or rather faime themselves to pray openly, that they may haue glory of men. But sith that hypocrisie is alwaies ambitious, it is no wonder that it is so blinde: therefore he commaundeth his Disciples, if they will pray rightly, to enter into their chamber. And though some, because it seemeth at the first to be absurde, doe expound it allegorically of the inward part of the heart, yet there is no neede of this subtiltie. Wee are commaunded in very many places of the scripture, to pray to GOD or praise him in the publike assembly or companie of men, and before all the people, to testifie our faith or thanketulnesse, that also wee might stirre others by our example to doe the like. And Christ doeth not forbidde vs this, but onely admonisheth vs to haue GOD before our eyes so oft as wee prepare our selues to prayer. Therefore these wordes are to bee vrged, *Enter into thy chamber.* As though he commanded vs to flee from the company of men, and shoulde affirme that wee could not pray rightly if any were by, For hee speaketh by comparison

parison, signifying that wee should rather seeke a secrete place, then desire the company of men which should see vs praying. And it is conuenient for the saythfull, to draw themselves from the company of menne, that they may the more freely poure out their desires and sighes before God. A secrete place is also profitable for another cause, that their mindes may be the rather sequestred and free from all allurementes: therefore Christe himselfe did very often hide himselfe in some secret place that he might pray: but this is not the matter that is intreated of in this place, for he only reprobeth the desire of vaine glory. But this is the sum, whether a man pray alone, or whether he pray before others, yet he must haue his affection, as if he were secret in his chamber, & had no other witnesse but onely God. When Christ sayth that we shall haue a reward for our prayers, hee declareth sufficiently that what reward soeuer the scripture in diuers places doth promise vs, is not paid as of debt, but is a free gift.

7. *Use not much babling.* He reprehendeth another fault in prayer: namely much babling. And hee vseth two woordes, but in the same sense. For *Batologia* signifieth a superfluous and vsuauory repetition: but *Polologia* is a vaine babling. Christ reprobeth also their foolishnesse, which, that they might perswade and entreate God, do poure out many woordes. And that diligence in praying which is so often commended in the scripture, is not contrary to this doctrine. For where the prayer is conceiued with earnest affection, the tongue doth not runne before the minde. Also the fauour of God is not obtained with a vaine heape of words: but the godly heart doth rather send out his affections, which as arrowes shall peirce the heavens: yet their superstition is here condemned, which thinke they pleasure God and do him seruice with their longe murmured prayers, with which error we see Popery so infected, that the greatest force of their prayer is supposed to consist in many wordes. For the more wordes any man hath muttered, the more effectually hee is accounted to haue prayed. Also they doe daily resounde out in their Churches long and tedious songs, as though they would allure Gods cares.

8. *For your father knoweth.* This one reason is sufficient to purge and take away this superstition which is here condemned. For from whence cometh this foolishnesse, that menne should thinke that they haue profited much, where as they weary GOD with their much babling, but because they imagine him to be like a mortall man, which hath neede to be taught and admonished. But who soeuer is perswaded that God hath not only a care of vs, but knoweth also our necessities, and noteth our desires and cares before hee is admonished, hee vseth not many wordes, but thinketh it sufficient to make his prayers, as is expedient for the exercise of his sayth. And he acknowledgeth it to be a thing absurde and to bee laughed at, to deale with God rethorically, as if that he were bowed with copie of wordes. But if God, before we aske doth know what we haue neede of, it seemeth to be in vaine to pray. For if of his own accord hee be ready to helpe vs, to what purpose is it for vs to adde our prayers, which breake as it were the willing course of his prouidence? The answer is easie by considering the ende of prayer: for the saythfull doe not praye as if they admonished God of thinges that hee knewe not, or exhorted him to doe his dutie, or stirred him vppe as one negligent or slowe: but rather that

that they might stirre vp themselves to seeke him and exercise their sayth in meditating of his promises, and that they might ease themselves by discharging their cares into his bosome, and lastly, that they might testifie as well to themselves as to others, that of him alone they hope and aske what soeuer is good. And that which he freely and vnasked determined to giue vs, he yet doth promise to giue at our requestes. Wherefore both is to be holden, he of his owne will preuenteth our prayers, and yet by prayers we obtaine that which we aske. But why he some time delayeth vs to a longer time, and also sometime granteth not our requestes, shall be shewed in an other place.

Matthew 6.

9. *After this maner therefore pray ye: Our father which art in heauen, hallowed be thy name.*

10. *Thy kingdome come. Thy will be done in earth as it is in heauen.*

11. *Giue vs this daye our dailye bread.*

12. *And forgieue vs our debtes, as we also for giue our debtors.*

13. *And lead vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill: for thine is the kingdome, & the power, and the glory for euer. Amen.*

Marke.

Luke 11.

1. *And so it was, as he was praying in a certaine place, whē he praied, one of his disciples sayd vnto him: master teach vs to pray, as Iohn also taught his disciples.*

2. *And he said vnto them, when ye pray, say: our father, which art in heauen, hallowed bee thy name, thy kingdome come. Let thy will be done euen in earth, as it is in heauen:*

3. *Our daily bread giue vs this daye:*

4. *And forgieue vs our sins: for euē we forgieue euery man that is indebted to vs: and lead vs not into temptation, but deliuer vs from euill.*

It is vncertaine whether Christ deliuered this forme of prayer to his disciples once or twise. This latter seemeth more probable to some: because Luke sayth that he was asked. But Math. bringeth him in teaching of his owne accord. Yet because that Matthew, as we sayd, gathereth together all the chiefe pointes of doctrine, that by the continued course the readers may the better perceiue the sum & meaning: And so it may be that Matthew omiteth the occasion which Luke reporteth, yet I will not contend with any man about this matter.

L V K E. 1. *As Iohn also taught.* That Iohn taught his disciples a priuate maner or forme of prayer, which I iudge he did as the time required. It is certaine that all things amongst the Iewes were then very corrupt, & the whole religion was then so decayed, that it is no maruell that there were but fewe which held the right order of prayer. Againe, when as the promised redemption was at hand, it was necessary that the minds of the faithfull should bee stirred vp to the hope & desire of the same. Iohn therefore might out of diuers places of the scripture gather some prayer which might be agreeable to the time, and most according to the spiritual kingdom of Christ which he began now to reueale.

M A T H. 9. *After this maner therefore praye you.* For the which Luke sayeth, *When you pray, say yee.* Yet Christe commaundeth not his disciples to pray in these conceiued woordes, but onely sheweth to what purpose they shoulde referre all their requests and prayers. Therefore in these 6. petiti-

ons is comprehended whatſoeuer is lawfull for vs to aſke of God. And there is nothing more profitable for vs then this doctrine: for when as this is a principall exerciſe of godlines, yet in making prayers and conceiuing our requeſts all our ſenſes doe ſayle. So no man ſhall pray rightly, but he whoſe mouth & heart the heauenly maiſter guideth. For this cauſe was this rule giuen, according to the which it is neceſſary to frame all our prayers, if wee couet to haue them accounted lawfull and approued of God.

It was not the will of the ſonne of God (as was ſayd euen now) to preſcribe vnto vs what wordes wee ſhould uſe, as if it were not lawfull to decline from that forme which he ſet downe: but yet he would that our prayers ſhould bee ſo directed and ordered, leaſt they ſhould wander beyond theſe bounds. Where by we gather that the law of prayer which he ſet downe, conſiſteth not in words but in the matters of things themſelues. Further, in that I ſayd that this prayer conſiſteth of ſixe petitions, it is to be knowne that the firſt three, not hauing regarde of vs, haue onely reſpect to the glory of God. And the laſt three are framed for thoſe things which are profitable for our ſaluation. For as the lawe is diuided into two tables, whereof the firſt containeth the duties of godlines, and the other of charitie: ſo in prayer Chriſt commandeth vs partly to looke & ſeeke for the glory of God, and partly he permitteth vs to prouide for our ſelues. Therefore let vs know that we are then well prepared to prayer, if wee be not onely carefull of our ſelues and our owne commoditie, but doe firſt ſeeke the glory of God: for it were too proſperous, onely to haue care of our own matters, and to neglect the kingdome of God, which is to be preferred farre before all things.

Our father which art in heauen. So oft as wee prepare our ſelues to prayer, wee muſt eſpecially conſider two things, partly that we may haue entrance to God, partly that with full and perfect truſt we may reſe our ſelues vpon him, that is, his fatherly loue towards vs, and his great power. Wherefore let vs not doubt but that God will willingly embrace vs, but that he is ready to heare our prayers, and alſo that he is willing of his owne accord to helpe vs. He is called by the name of father. Therefore Chriſt in this epithite doth miniſter vnto vs much matter for the ſtay of our faith: but becauſe that we reſt on the goodnes of God onely in part, in the next claufe he commendeth to vs his power. For when the ſcripture ſayth that God is in heauen, it declareth that all thinges are vnder his power, and that the worlde and whatſoeuer is in it, is containe in his hand, that his power is ſpread in euery place, and all thinges are ordained by his prouidence. Dauid ſayth in the Pſalme. 2. 4. The dweller in the heauens ſhall laugh them to ſcorne. Alſo in the Pſalme 115. 3. Our GOD in heauen hath done whatſoeuer he would. But God is not ſo placed in heauen, as if he were ſhut vp therein: for that rather is to be conſidered, which is ſayd in the ſeconde booke of the Chronicles, ſecond chapter, and ſixt verſe. The heauen of heauens cannot containe him. But this maner of ſpeech exempting him out of the order of his creatures, warneth vs that there ought no baſe or earthly thing enter into our mindes, when as he is conſidered of, becauſe that he is greater then all the worlde.

Now.

Now we conceiue the purpose of Christ: namely, that in the beginning of prayer he would establish the faith of his disciples in the goodnes and power of God, for prayers shall want their fruite, except they be grounded vppon faith. Now sith it is fond, yea madde arrogancie, to cal God father, but as grafted in to the body of Christ, we are acknowledged for sonnes: Hereby we gather that there is no other manner of prayer to come to God with, but in the person of the mediatur.

Hallowed be thy name. Here doth more evidently appeare that I sayd, that in the first three petitions, the care of our selues being not regarded, the glory of God is sought, not that it is seperate from our saluation, but that the maiestie of God deserueth to be preferred far aboue all other cares. It is for our good that God doth raigne, & that his glory be giuen vnto him: but no man is zealous inough for Gods glory, but he that after a sort forgetteth himselfe, and aduanceth forth himselfe to seeke the height of the same. Also there is great similitude and likeness betweene these three petitions. For the hallowing of the name of God is alwayes ioyned with his kingdome, and the principall part of his kingdome is established in this, that his will may be done. But who soeuer doth consider how great our coldnes is, and how sluggish we are in seeking the cheifest things of all, whereof we are here in these petitions admonished, he will grant that there is in this nothing superfluous or in vaine: but it is that these three things heere required, should be thus distinguished. To sanctifie the name of God is nothing else then to giue to God his honour, whereof he is worthy, that men should neuer speake nor thinke of him without great reuerence. This is hindered by prophaning of his name: that is, when either his maiestie is diminished, or that me do with lesse reuerence and honour vse it, then he doth deserue. Also the glory whereby he is sanctified, riseth & dependeth of this, when as men do acknowledge his wisdom, mercy, iustice, power, and all goodnes that is in him. For God hath his holines alwayes remaining perfect to himselfe. but men do partly obscure the same through their owne malice and wickednesse, and partly defile and pollute it through their sacrilegious contempt. Therefore the summe of this petition is that the glory of God may shine in the worlde, and bee celebrated amongst men as it ought. And then doth religion flourish best, when men account that which proceedeth from God, to be righte laudable, and full of righteoufnesse and wisdom. For hereof it commeth to passe that they embrace his word in obedience of faith, and are satisfied and rest in all his desires and workes. For that faith which wee yelde to the word of God (as Iohn sayth 3. 33.) is as a subscription, wherewith wee testifie that God is true: euen to incredulitie, and contempt of his word striketh him with most grievous contumely. Now wee see for the most parte howe maliciously wee account of Gods workes, and how great a libertie of reprovng, euery man taketh to himselfe. If he chaltice any of vs, they keepe a stirre, complaine and murmure, and some also doe breake out into open blasphemies, and except hee satisfie our afflictions, we do not think him liberal inough towards vs. Many do ouerthwartly or scornefully bable of his vnspokeable providence & secret iudgments. Also his holy name is oft taken to grosse iestings: to bee short, the greatest parte of the worlde doeth prophane his holinesse as much as in them lieth. Therefore

It is no maruaile if we require first that he may haue in the world that reuerence that he deserueth. But this is no small account that God doth make of vs, when he comendeth to vs the care to seeke his glory.

10 *Thy kingdome come.* I hough the Greeke verbe bee a simple, yet the sence shall remayne perfect if we reade it as a compound, as the old interpreter doth translate it. But first the definition of the kingdome of God is to be considered: for he is sayd to raigne amongst men when as their flesh is brought vnder the yoke, and that they haue bidden their affections farwell, and doe willingly and freely giue themselves to be ruled by him. For in this corruption of nature all our affections are so many fouldiours of Sathan, which strue against the righteoufnesse of God, and so doe hinder or disturbe his kingdome. Wherefore in this petition we desire that all lets being taken away, he would bring all mortall men vnder his gouernement, and lead them to the meditation of the heavenly life, and this is brought to passe partly by the preaching of the worde, and partly by the secret power of his spirite. His will is to gouerne men with his worde: but because his naked voyce, without the inward working of his spirite bee added, cannot pearce into the hearts, it is necessary that they both bee ioyned together to the establishing of the kingdome of God. Therefore wee pray that God would exercise his power as well in word as in spirite, that the wiole worlde may willingly submit it selfe vnto him. All disorder and confusion hindereth the kingdome of GOD: neyther is there any thing ordayned in the worlde, but when hee with his hand gouerneth their counsels and afflictions. Heereby wee gather that the beginning of the kingdome of God in vs, is the destruction of the olde man, and the denyall of our selues, that wee might be renewed into an other life. But God also raigneth after an other sorte, while that hee ouerthroweth his enemies, and bringeth them with Sathan their head perforce vnder his power, vntill they are all made his footestoolle. Wherefore the summe of this petition that GOD should lighten the worlde with the light of his worde, and with the breath of his spirite fraine the hearts in obedience to his righteoufnesse, and that he would through his forces bring into order what soeuer is disordered vpon earth: and that he will begin his kingdome at pulling vnder the lustes of our fleshe. But now because the kingdome of GOD encreaseth continually vnto the ende of the world, it is necessarie dayly to pray for his comming. For as much iniquitie as remaineth in the world, so farre is the kingdome of God from that full perfection it requireth.

Thy will be done. Although the will of God be one and simple, in respect of it selfe: yet it is proposed vnto vs in the scriptures after two sorts. For it is sayd to be done either pleased God, when hee performeth the secrete decrees of his prouidence, though men do obstinately bend themselves against it. But we are commanded to pray heere that his will may bee done after an other manner: that is, that all creatures may quietly and without resistance obey him. The which doth the better appeare by comparison: for as hee hath the Angels ready at all commaundements (whereof they are called his ministers alwayes ready to obey him) so wee desire to haue all mens mindes framed to that consent to the righteoufnesse of GOD, that they may willingly bend, which

way soeuer he becke. And this is a godly will wherein wee submit our selues to the will of God, and subscribe to all his decrees: but this petition comprehendeth somewhat more: that is, that God abolishing all resistance of menne which ceaseth not to stirre against him, would make them apt to bee taught and humble to him, that they will not, nor desire any thinge except it please him and bee approued by him. Yet a question may bee moued. whether wee ought to pray to God, for that which he sayth shall neuer bee to the ende of the worlde: I answer it is no neede to liste euery man while we pray that the earth may bee framed to obedience. For it sufficeth vs to testifie in this petition, that what soeuer wee see against the will of God. we hate and sorrow & wish the same extinguished: that he should not be onely a gouernour of all our affections, but that wee might offer vpon our selues wholly to fulfill that wil, with that readinesse that becommeth vs.

11. *Give vs this day our daily bread.* This is, as I sayd, the second table or parte, of the order of prayer which Christ taught vs: for that I might the more aptly teach, I did so at the first distinguish them. As of the 2. tables of the law the first giueth in charge for the right worship of God, and the other of the dutie of churitie. So in this prayer the first part instructeth vs to seeke the glory of God, then in the other part he sheweth what is conuenient for vs to aske for our selues. Yet it is also to be noted that those prayers which wee conceale for our owne saluation or profite, ought to be referred to the last ende: for it is not lawfull for vs to be so occupied with the care of our owne profite, but that the glory of God should alwayes haue the first place. Therefore so oft as we pray, we must neuer turne our eyes from the marke or line. There is yet this difference betweene the two sorts or parts of prayer which I set downe: that while we speake of the kingdome of God, and of the hallowing of his name, it behooueth vs to lift vp our fences on high, that hauing no regard of our selues, they should attend vpon God alone. And then, that we should descend to our selues, and ioine the care of our saluation with those former petitions, which belong to God alone. And although forgiuenes of sinnes is to bee preferred before foode, euen as much as the soule excelleth the body, yet Christ beginneth at bread, and the sustentation of this earthly life, that from such a beginning he might leade them higher. Therefore we do not desire to haue our daily bread before reconciliation to God, as though that we should esteeme more of the corrupt foode of the belly, then of the eternall saluation of the soule: but our minds do ascend from the earth into heauen, as it were by steps. For when as God vouchsafeth to imploy himselfe to nourish the bodies, it is not to be doubted but that he is much more carefull of the spirituall foode. Therefore his so louing kindnes doth raise vp our faith higher. That many do take the Greeke word signifying bread, for more then substantiall or supernaturall, is altogether absurde. And the reason which Erasmus bringeth is not onely frivoulous, but also contrary to godlinesse, it seemeth not probable to him, that while we appeare in the sight of God, Christ should commaund vs to speake of nourishmets. As though the like is not to be found out of diuers places of the scripture, that by the taste of these present goodes, wee may be led into the hope of heauenly thinges: nay, but this is a mist tryall of our faith, when as we aske nothing

from any other then from God, and we doe not onely acknowledge him to be the onely fountaine of all good thinges, but wee also feele his fatherly goodnes stretched out euen to the least thinges, so that hee refuseth not to take care euen of our flesh.

And that Christ speaketh here of corporall foode, may first be gathered here-of, that otherwise it should be maimed, and no full or perfect prayer. For we are commanded in many places to cast all our cares into the bosome of God, and he promiseth liberally, that he will sayle vs in nothing. Therefore in an exact rule of right prayer, it is necessary that somewhat should be commanded for the innumerable necessities of this present life. Also this word *this day*, signifieth that we aske here of God, that we need not care but for a day. For it is not to be doubted, but that his meaning was to restraine and moderate the couetousnes of earthly foode whereunto we are all immoderately caried. Alfo it is sufficiently knowne that the figure Synecdoche is vsed in this woorde breade, for vnder it the Hebrewes doe comprehend all kinde of nourishment. But it is vsed here more largely: for we doe not onely desire to haue foode giuen vs by the hande of God, but also that hee woulde giue vs what soeuer is necessary for to passe this life through with. Nowe the sense is cleare: wee are first commaunded to pray, that God woulde defende and nourish in this world the life which hee hath giuen vs: and because it needeth many helpes, that he woulde giue vs what soeuer he knoweth necessary. Now because that the loue of God floweth continually to feede vs, the breade which hee giueth, is called daily or continually comming, for so it may be interpreted.

Therefore this woorde signifieth as muche as if hee hadde sayde. Lorde sith our life hath daily neede of newe nourishment, be thou neuer weary in bestowing the same daily vpon vs. That Aduerbe *This day*, is vsed as I sayde before, to bridle our greedy couetousnesse, that wee might learne continually to depend vpon the goodnesse of GOD, and to be content with that measure which hee bestoweth vpon vs day by day (as they say.) But a question is moued: Sith it is certaine that Christe gaue vs this as a generall rule of prayer to all the godly: and of that number there are some rich men which haue much layed vppe in store, how hee commandeth them to aske that which they haue at home, and to aske for a day which haue a boundaunce to serue them a yeare. The answer is easie: for wee are warned by these wordes, that there is not any heape of store and prouision ought worth, except that God doe daily feede vs: though wheate, wine, and aliother thinges doe abunde, except they be watered with the secrete blessing of GOD, they shall presently vanishe away, or the vse of them shall bee taken away, or that power which is ingrafted in them to feed vs, shall fall away, that in our abundance we shal be hunger starued.

Wherefore it is no maruaile if Christe doeth generally call rich. and poore to this heauenly nourishment: but no man shall pray so heartily, as hee that hath learned by the example to hunger, and to abunde, so that hee canne beare his neede and want patiently, and not become drunke with the decciull hope of his boundaunce?

If any manne demaunde, why wee aske to haue this breade giuen vs which now we doe call and account our owne: I answer, it is called ours, not because that it is due to vs by righte, but because that it is appointed for our vse by the fatherly goodnesse of God. And so after that sorte it is made ours, for that the heauenly father doeth giue it vs freely, least our wante bee not supplied. Wee must till the fieldes, endeouour to gather in the fruites of the earth, euery manne must apply himselfe and beare the labour of his calling, that hee may gette his liuing, yet this letteth not, but that we are fedde by the free goodnes of God, without the which menne should waite away themselues in labour in vayne. Therefore we are taught to acknowledge as receiued from thence, whatsoeuer seemeth to be gotte by our industry. Yet by this worde it is also to be gathered, if wee desire to bee fedde of God, we must abstine from that which is none of ours. For all the children of God, so oft as they vse this manner of prayer, doe testifie that they desire nothing but that which they may rightly call their owne.

II. *Forgiue vs our debtes.* Heere it behooueth vs to remember that which I sayde euen now, that Christe in placing the requestes of his, regarded not what was first or last in order. For sith it is written in the foure and forty chapter of I say, and the two and twenty verse, and the fiftie, and nine, the second verse, and Lam. 3. 44. that our finnes are as a wall which hinder vs from coming to God, and as a cloude whereby his eyes are hindered from beholding vs, it is necessary that our prayers shoulde alwayes beginne at the forgiuenesse of finnes, because that wee are here by first emboldned to pray to GOD while that hee is mercifull vnto vs, because that hee cannot bee otherwise appealed towards vs, then by forgiuing finnes freely. But Christe comprehendeth in two petitiones those thinges which appertaine to the eternall saluation and spirittuall life of the soule: as these two are the principall partes of the covenant of God, in which our whole saluation consisteth: that hee offereth free reconciliation, not imputing finnes vnto vs, and promisseth the spirite which engraueth the righteousnesse of the lawe in our heartes. Therefore we are commaunded to aske both, and first we make request for the obtaining of forgiuenesse of finnes.

Matthew calleth finnes debtes, because that in guiltines they binde vs to the iudgement seate of God, and make vs debtors: Nay, they do wholly estrange vs from God, so that there is no hope of obtaining peace & fauour, but by forgiuenesse. So is that fulfilled which Paule teacheth, Romans 3. 23. All are guiltye and are deprived of the glory of God: for though the righteousnesse of God doth partly shine in his Saintes, yet so long as they are cloathed with flesh, they remaine laden with finnes. So there can none be found so pure, which needeth not the mercy of God, whereof if we desire to be pertakers, it is necessary that we should feele our owne miserie. And they that imagine that they haue such a perfection in this world, that they are free from all sinne and faulte, they doe so much forsake siane, as they doe Christ himselfe, from whose Church they exclude themselves. For whereas he commaundeth all his disciples to flee daily to forgiue nesse of finnes, he wipeth himselfe out of the number of his disciples, that thinketh this remedy to be superfluous.

Now this remission which we desire to haue bestowed vpon vs, ouerthroweth those satisfactions which the world endeoureth to redeeme it selfe withal. For that creditour is not sayde to forgiue, which hauing receiued his payment doth require no more: but hee that willingly and freely leauing his owne right acquiteth his debtour. Neyther hath that common distinction of the fault and of the punishment, any place heere. For it is not to be doubted but that debtors doe signifie the deseruing of the punishment.

If it bee forgiuen vs freely, all recompences must needs vanish away. Neyther is Luke his meaning any other, though he nameth sinnes, because that God doeth not otherwise pardon, then by taking away the guiltinesse. *As we forgiue.* This clause is therefore added, least any man should presume to come to God to aske forgiveness, except he be free and voyd from all hatred, yet this pardon which we desire to be giuen vs, doth not depend of that which wee performe to others: but it was the will of Christ after this manner to forgiue all offences, and also the better to confirme the hope of our forgiveness as with a seale. Neyther is that clause which Luke hath, which signifieth *As* or *For*, any thing contrary: because that it was not the purpose of Christ to note the cause, but onely to admonish vs what minde we ought to beare towards the brethren, whiles wee desire to be reconciled to God. And certainly if the spirit of G O D doth raigne in our hearts, all euill will and desire of reuenge must cease. And sith the spirit is a witnesse of our adoption, wee see that here is simply set down a note whereby the children of God may be discerned from strangers. They are heere called debtors, not of money, or of some dutie, but they that are endangered to vs through iniuries offered vs.

13. *And lead vs not into temptation.* This petition hath bene corruptly deuided by some into two, when as by the matter it selfe it appeareth to be one and the same, and the conioyning of the woordes doeth shewe the same. For that conjunction aduersatiue, which is placed in the midst, ioyneth two clauses together, which Augustine doeth also wisely consider. Therefore the sentence ought thus to bee taken, least wee bee caried into temptation, deliuer vs from euill. And the summe is, that wee acknowledging our own weakness, doe desire to bee defended by the power of G O D, that wee may stand strongly against all the attempts of Sathan. As out of the former petition wee haue shewed that no man can bee accounted a Christian, except hee acknowledge himselfe to bee a sinner, so by this wee gather, that wee haue no power of our selues to liue well, but as God doth giue the same vnto vs. For who soeuer for the vanquishing of temptations doth require the help of G O D, hee granteth himselfe to haue such neede of him to bee his deliuerer, that hee should otherwise bee ouerthrowne. But this word *Temptation* is often taken generally for euery tryall: in which sense it is sayd that Abraham was tempted of G O D when his faith was tryed. So we are tried as with aduersities, so also with prosperities: because that by this occasion the afflictions which before lay hid doe come to light. But heere is noted the inward temptation which may bee aptly called the scourge of the deuill to stirre vp our concupiscence, For it were absurd to aske of God, that he should

deliuer vs from all instructions of our faith. Therefore all wicked motions which stirre vs vppe to sinne, are comprehended vnder this worde temptation. And though it cannot be, but that we shall feele such prickes in our mindes, because that through the whole course of life wee haue continuall warre with the flesh: yet we aske of the Lord that he make vs not subiect to temptations, or suffer vs to be ouerwhelmed. And that Christ might the better declare howe apt wee are to slide into these dayly falles and ruines, except God sustaine vs with his hand, he vsed this maner of speech, leade vs not into temptation: or as other translate it, Carie vs not. It is certaine that euery man is tempted of his diuine concupiscence, as Iames teacheth in the first chapter, and fourteene verse. But because God doth not onely deliuer vs to the pleasure of Sathan, that he might kindle the fire of concupiscence; but vseth him as the minister of wrath, so oft as hee will driue men headlong to destruction, he also after his maner leadeth men to destruction. In the which sence it is sayde that the euill spirit of God came vpon Saule, and diuers places of the scripture tende to the same purpose, yet we may not call God the authour of euill: because that in deliuering men into a reprobate sence, hee doeth not exercise an vniust tyrannie, but executeth his iust iudgements though they bee secret. *Deliuier vs from euill.* Euill in this place may as well bee taken in the neuter gender as in the masculine.

Chrysostome referreth it to the deuill, who is the framer of all euils, and as a deadly enemye of our saluation, doeth dayly assault vs, yet it may as conueniently be taken for sinne, but there neede no strife about that matter: Because the sence remaineth almost all one: that is, that we are cast forth to the deuill and sinne, except the Lord doth defend and deliuer vs.

For thine is the kingdome. It is maruaile that the Latines did omit this conclusion of prayer. For it is not only added to stirre vp our heartes to require the glory of God, and to admonish vs what ought to be the end of our prayers: but also that it may teach vs, that our prayers which are heere taught vs, ought to be grounded no other where then vpon God alone, least we should stay vpon our owne merites.

Mathew 6.

14. For if you doe forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly father will also forgive you.

15. But if yee doe not forgive menne their trespasses, no more will your father forgive you your trespasses.

Marke 11.

25. But when yee shall stand, and pray, forgive if ye haue any thing against any man, that your father also which is in heauen, may forgive you your trespasses:

26. For if you will not forgive, your father which is in heauen, will not pardon you your trespasses.

Luke.

Christe doeth heere onely set downe, for what purpose that clause was

was added, forgive vs, as wee forgive: that is to say, that God will not be otherwise entreated of vs, then wee doe shew our selues ready to forgive, if any shall hurt vs. And certainly, except we were harder then yron, this exhortatiō should mollifie vs, that we might be ready to forgive offences. Except God doe daily forgive vs diuers offences, we know that we should perish many wayes. But hee promisc th vs forgienesse of no other conditiō, except we pardon our brethren whatsoeuer they haue faulted against vs. Therefore they do willingly and with set purpose & mindes addicte themselues to destruction, and they doe their diligence to prouoke Gods anger, which will not forget the iniuries offered and done vnto them.

Matthew 6.

Marke.

Luke.

16. Moreover when yee fast, looke not sowre as the hypocrites: for they disfigure their faces, that they might seeme vnto men to fast. Verily I say vnto you, that they haue their reward.

17. But when thou fastest, annoynt thy heade and wash thy face.

18. That thou seeme not vnto men to fast, but vnto thy father which is in secreete: and thy father which seeth in secret, will reward thee openly.

He retourneth againe to the former doctrine. For when hee had begunne to reprehend the vaine ostentation in almes and prayers, hee set down a lawfull rule of praying. Now as concerning fasting, he giueth the same commaundement to his disciples, that he gaue before of prayers and almes, least they with greater diligence seeke to please the world, then to haue God a wiunes of their workes. Also that hee comaundeth to annoint the head and washe the face, is hyperbolically: for Christ doeth not so draw vs from one kinde of hypocrisie, that he might leade vs into an other.

Therefore hee doeth not commaunde vs to sayne daintinesse, neither doeth hee so exhorte vs to a temperate diet, that he might nourish a delicacy in oyntmentes and apparelling: but hee doth simply exhorte vs to keepe a moderation, wherein there should bee nothing eyther straunge or affectate: as if he should haue sayd, we must so apply our selues to fastings, that we chaunge nothing in the accustomed maner of our life. That he promisc th from God a reward to fastings, is an improper manner of speech, as it is sayd a litle before of prayers, though there is a great difference betweene prayers and fastings. For prayers and almes are chiefe amongst the duties of charitie: but fasting is of it selfe a worke indifferent, & not of that sort which God requireth and approoueth, as almes are. But it pleaseth him onely as it is referred to an other end: that is, that it may exercise vs to abstinencie, that it may tame the wantonnesse of the fleshe, that it may stirre vs vp and inflame vs to prayer, that it may be a testimony of our repentance, so oft as we are vrged with the iudgement of God. Therefore the meaning of Christes words is, that God wil sōtime declare openly

that those good works doe please him, which seemed to bee lost, because that men saw them not.

Matthew. 6.

19. Laye not vppe treasures for your selues vppon the earth, where the moth and canker corrupte, and where theeuës digge through and steale.

20. But laye vppe treasures for your selues in heauen, where neyther the moth nor canker corrupteth, and where theeuës neither digge through nor steale.

21. For where your treasure is, there will your heart be also.

Marke.

Luke, 12.

33. Sell that you haue, and giue almes: make you bagges which waxe not olde, a treasure that canne neuer fayle in heauen, where no theefe commeth: neither moth corrupteth.

34. For where your treasure is, there wil your hearts be also.

19. Lay not vppe. This deadly plague raigneth euery where in the world, so that menne become madde through an insatiable desire of hauing. But christ reprooueth them of foolishnesse, that their felicitie beeing sette in riches, gathered with great care, is made subiect to woormes and the canker, and is layd forth to the spoyle of theeuës. And what is more contrary to reason, then to lay vp their goodes there, where as eyther they may perish of themselves, or be stolen away by men. But the couetous menne thinke not thus, for they shutte vppe their riches into chestes wel locked: yet they cannot auoide, but that their riches shall bee subiecte to theeuës or to the mothes. Therefore they are blind, and lacke their right sense, which bestowe so much labour and paine in gathering riches, which are subiecte eyther to rottenesse, or stealthes, or to a thousande other such casualties: especially sith God doeth allow vs a place in heauen to lay vp treasure in, and doth louingly call vs to possesse those riches which doe neuer perithe. And they are sayde to lay vppe their treasure in heauen, which being loosed out of the snares of this worlde doe employ their cares and studies in meditation of the heauenly life.

Luke setteth not downe the Antithesis, but noteth the other occasion why Christe commanded them to prepare sackes that doe not waxe olde. For hee had sayde: sell those things which you possesse, that you may giue alms. Now because it is hard and sharpe to men to spoyle themselves of their own goodes, to ease them of this trouble hee proposeth a large and a liberall hope of recompence: that is, that they which helpe the neede of their brethren vpon earth, doe lay vppe treasure for themselves in heauen, according to that saying of Salomon: Hee that giueth to the poore, lendeth to the Lorde. But that commandement which hee giueth of selling the possessions, is not precisely to be vrged, as though it were not lawfull for a Christian to keepe any thing for him selfe. His will was onely to teach, that wee must not giue to the poore after that sort, as that if any thing bee superfluous, that should be bestowed of them: But our landes may not bee spared if the reuenerwes which wee haue at hande suffice not the necessitie of the poore. As if hee shoulde haue sayd let your liberality extend it selfe euen to the diminishing of the patrimonie & the alienation of landes.

21. *Where your treasure is.* In this sentence Christ conuinceth & proueth them to be miserable men, which haue their treasures layde vpon earth: because that their felicitie is corrupt & vanishing. But couetous men say, th. t they are nothing the lesse hindered, but that they may haue their heart in heauen. But Christ opposeth this generall rule, that whersoever men doe taighe their chiefe felicity to be, they are thither bound and tied. It followeth hereof that they renounce heauen, which desire to be happy in this world. We know how diligently the Philosophers disputed of the chiefe felicitie, yea & they traueiled most about this point, & not without a cause, sith that thereupon dependeth the whole course of framing of mans life, and all the senses haue regard to this.

If honour be adiudged to be the chiefe felicitie, it is necessary that ambition should wholly possesse the mindes of men: if mony, then conetousnesse shall presently obtaine the kingdom: if pleasure, it cannot bee but that men should degenerate into a beastly wantonnesse: for naturally we are all inclined to desire the chiefe good, so it cometh to passe, that false imaginations do carry vs hither & thither. If that we were rightly & certainly perswaded that our felicitie is in heauen, it were easie to ascend & clime into heauen, treading the world vnder feete, and despying all earthly goodes, whose deceitfull baytes doe bewitch the most part of them. After this maner Paule, while hee would life the faythfull vp on high, and exhort them to the studie of the heauenly life, proposeth Christ vnto them, in whom only the perfecte felicitie is to be sought: as if hee should haue sayde, that it were an absurde and an vnworthy thing, that their mindes should be settled vpon the earth, whose treasure is in heauen.

Matth. 6.

22. *The light of the bodye is the eye: if that thine eye be single, thy whole body shall be light.*

23. *But if thine eye be wicked, then all thy body shall be darke. Wherefore, if the light that is in thee, be darkened, how great is the darknes?*

24. *No manne can serue two masters: for either he shall hate the one, and loue the other: or else he shall lean to the one, & despise the other, yee cannot serue God and riches.*

Marke.

Luke 11.

34. *The light of the bodye is the eye: therefore when thine eye is single, then is thy whole body light: but if thine eye be euill, then thy body is darke.*

35. *Take heede therefore, that the light, which is in thee, bee not darkened.*

36. *If therefore thy whole bodye shall bee light, hauing no parte darke, then shall all bee light, euen as when a candle doth light thee with his brightness.*

Luke 16.

13. *No seruant canne serue two maisters: for eyther hee shall hate the one, and loue the other, or els hee shall leane to the one, and despise the other, yee cannot serue God and riches.*

22. *The light of the body is the eye.* This is to bee remembred, which I did firste giue warning of, that heere are short sentences gathered together,

and not a continuall sermon. Also the summe and meaning of this sentence is, that menne through slouth do goe astray : because they bend not themselves, as it becommeth them, to the right purpose. For whereof commeth it to passe that men so filthily doe wander, slide, or fall: but because that through their corrupt iudgement, while that they had rather satisfie their owne pleasures, then the iustice of God, they do not onely choake the light of reason, which ought to gouerne their life, but they doe wholly turne it into darkenesse? And Christ vseth a sin illicude, calling the eye the light of the whole body : as if hee shoulde haue sayd, when men walke, neither the handes, nor the feete, nor the belly can direct nor gouerne the way, but only the eye sufficeth to guide the other members. Therefore if the hands and the feete are rashly caried whether it is not meete, the fault is to be imputed to the eyes, which did not their dutie.

Now the similitude is to bee applyed to the minde : all the affections are as certaine members of the same, but they haue neede of direction, because they are blinde of themselves. Nowe God vseth a reason, which may bring them into order, and excell a candle for shewing the way. But what vse they to doe for the most part? namely, that vprightnesse of mind that was giue them, they do willingly corrupt and peruert, so that there remaineth not one sparke of light. He calleth that a simple eye, that is not couered with any webbe, nor blemished with beardnes, nor troubled with any other fault. He taketh *poneron* for faulty. The light body, which is lightened, so that his deeds are rightly ordered. And that is called darke, which is confusedly carryed into diuers errors. Therefore we see as wee haue sayde before, that the slouth of those men is reprobued in these words, which neglect the opening of the eies of their minds, to the gouernemente of their affections. And it is friuolous that the Papistes doe hereof gather, that men doe excell in reason and wisdom, so that they haue free election of good and euill. For Christ doth not declare in this place what power we haue : but howe it becommeth vs to walke : that is, that we may bee directed to some certaine purpose. And he teacheth that the course of mans life is therefore darke, because that no manne proposeth to himselfe a right ende, but all menne doe nourishe themselves to follow that which is euill, greedily. I graunt that by nature their is reason grafted into menne, whereby they might discern betwene vices and vertues : but I saye that it was so corrupted through sinne, that it fayleth at euery steppe. Yet it followeth not, but that menne doe willingly thrust themselves into darkenesse, as if with cloased eyes they fledde the proffered light : because that witting and willing they follow after their owne lustes.

23. *If the light that is in thee.* He calleth reason light, how litle soeuer was lefte remaining in nien after the fall of Adam : and he calleth darkenesse grosse and beastly affections. The meaning thereof is, that it is no maruaile if that men do so filthily and beastly wallow themselves in the myre of sinnes: seeing that there is no reason, which might gouerne the blind and darke pleasures of the fleshe. But he sayth, that the light is turned into darkenesse, not only when menne do suffer the iudgement of their minde to be ouerwhelmed with the wicked lustes of the fleshe : but yeelding their witte to peruersethoughtes, doe degenerate as it were into beastes. For wee see howe maliciously menne doe turne
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that wisdom, that was giuen them to craft or subtiltie, that they might seeke deepe thoughtes, as sayeth the Prophet Esay 29. 15. that through their subtilties they might proudly rise vp against God: to bee short, they doe diuerse wayes attempt to be wise, to their owne destruction. Wherefore Christ doth not without cause pronounce, that it cannot bee, but that horrible and thicke darkenesse shall raigne in the life, when men of set purpose do make themselves blinde. The same is the meaning of those words in Luke, but that Christ doth there ioyne this sentence with that, which was expounded before in the fift chapter of Mathew, no man lighteth a candle, & setteth it in a secret place, &c. Also in stead of this clause, if the light that is in thee, are darkenesse, &c. he setteth downe an exhortation, Take heede that the light that is in thee be not darknesse: as if he should haue sayd, take heede, least thy minde, which should shine as a light, for the direction of all thy actions, doe not darken and peruert thy whole life. After hee addeth, when the body is lightened by the eye, all the members of the same shalbe the better gouerned, euen as a light lighted shineth and pearleth into all the parts of the chamber.

24. *No man can serue.* Christ returneth to his former doctrine, which is, that hee may withdraw his disciples from couetousnesse. He had sayd before that the heart of man is bound and tyed to his treasure, Now hee telleth them that their hearts are alienated from the Lord, which addeth themselves to riches. For the greater part of men doe sport themselves vnder a false pretence, while that they doe imagine that they can deuide themselves betwene God & their couetous desires. But Christ denieth it to be possible, that any man can at one time obey God and his owne flesh. And without doubt that prouerbe was then commonly vsed: no man can serue two maisters at once. Therefore that which was receiued by the opinion of all, hee taketh for granted, and so doeth apply it to the present cause, where riches doe raigne, there is the gouernment taken from God. It is not impossible for them that are rich men to serue God: but whosoever deliuereth himselfe to serue his riches, it is necessary that he should set himselfe free from the seruice of God: because that couetousnesse doeth alwayes make vs bondslaves of the deuill. I haue ioyned that to this text, which L V K E setteth downe in another place: because when the Euangelistes doe here and there, as occasion serueth, set downe out of the doctrine of Christ sentences in diuerse places, we neede not thinke much to apply them together. But that which is heere especially sayd of riches, may bee well extended to all other kinde of vices.

When as God doth euery where commend so much sinceritie, and doeth abhorre the double heart, they are all deceiued, that thinke that hee will bee content with one halfe of their heart. They all confesse in word, that GOD cannot be truly worshipped, but with an entyre and whole affection: but in deede they denie it, while they endeouour to reconcile things contrary between themselves. The ambitious man sayth, I will not cease to serue God though I apply a good part of my wit to hunt after honors. The couetous, the voluptuous, the gluttonous, the lecherous, the cruell, & euery one do boast the fame for themselves, as though it were possible, for them to serue God in part, which are openly seene of purpose to fight against him. It is true that the faithfull themselves

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are neuer so wholly addicted to obey God, but that they are ofte withdrawne with sinfull lustes of the flesh. But because they ligh vnder this miserable slauerie, and are displeased with themselves, & doe not otherwise serue the flesh, but vnwillingly, and with resistance: they are not accounted to serue two masters: because that their studies and endeuours are so approued to the Lord, as if they had yeelded perfect obedience vnto him. And heere is their hypocritic reioyced, which flatter themselves in their sinnes, as if they could ioyne light and darkenesse together.

Mathevv 6.

25. Therefore I say vnto you, be not carefull for your life, what ye shall eate, or what ye shall drink nor yet for your bodie what you shall put on: Is not the life more worthy then meat, and the body then rayment?

26. Beholde the fowles of the heauen: for they sowe not, neither reap, nor cary into the barnes: yet your heavenly father feedeth them. Are ye not much better then they?

27 Which of you by taking care, is able to adde one cubite to his stature?

28. And why care ye for rayment? Learne how the lilies of the field doe growe, they labour not, neither spinne.

29. Yet I say vnto you, that euen Salomon in all his glory was not arrayed like one of these.

30. Wherefore, if GOD so cloath the grasse of the felds, which is to day, and to morowe is cast into the oven: shall hee not doe much more vnto you, O ye of little faith.

Marke.

Luke. 12.

22. And he spake vnto his disciples: Therefore I say vnto you, Take no thought for your life, what ye shall eate: neither for your body, what you shall put on.

23. The life is more then meate, and the body more then the raiment.

24. Consider the Ravens: for they neither sow, nor reape: which neyther haue store-house, nor barne, and yet God feedeth them: how much more are ye better then fowles?

25. And which of you by taking thoughts can adde one cubit to his stature

26. If ye then be not able to doe the least thinges, why take ye thought for the remnant?

27. Consider the Lilies how they grow, they labour not, neither spinne they: yet I say vnto you, that Salomon himselfe in all his royaltie was not cloathed like one of these.

28. If then God so cloath the grasse, which is to day in the felds, and to morow is cast into the oven: how much more will he cloath you, O ye of little faith?

In this Sermon Christ doth reprehend the excessiue care of meat & cloathing, wherewith men doe vexe and torment themselves, and he giueth also a remedie to heale this disease. That he forbiddeth them to be carefull, ought not to be taken so precisely, as if he would haue his to be carelesse. For we know that men are borne of that condition, that they should sustaine some care: yea, this is not the least portiō of the miseries, which the Lord hath inioyned to vs, as a punishment, that he might humble vs. But he condēneth the immoderate care for two causes: that is, because men do waste & torment themselves therewith
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in vaine, by taking more then is meete, or their calling will beare: then, that they take more vppon themselves, then is meete for them, and vsing their own industry, they neglecte to call vppon God. That promise is to bee holden, Psal. 127. 2. When the vnfaithfull doe lie downe late, and shall rise early, they shall eate the bread of sorrowe, the faythfull shall through the grace of GOD, enioy rest and sleepe. Therefore the sonnes of God, though they bee not free from labour and care, yet it cannot bee properly sayde, that they are carefull for the life: because that they reposing themselves in the prouidence of God, doe quietly take their rest. Hereby it may be easily gathered, howe much euery man ought to care for their liuing: namely, that euery one of vs should labour as much as his calling doth beare, and that the Lord doth further appoynte, that their necessitie should prouoke euery man to call vpon God. Such a care is a meane betweene slouthfull securitie and excessiue tormentes, where with the vnfaithfull doe waste themselves. If that wee doe weigh the woordes of Christ well, he doth not forbid vs euery care, but that which groweth of distrust. Be not carefull saith he, what yee eate or drinke, for that is the property of them that tremble for feare of pouerty and want, as if that they should want prouision euery moment.

25. *Is not the life more worth?* He reasoneth from the more to the lesse. He had forbidden them to care too much how the life may be maintayned, now he addeth a reason: The Lorde, which gaue the life it selfe, will not suffer that those things should be wanting, which appertayne to the sustaining of the same. And certainly we do God no small iniury, so oft as wee distrust that God will not giue vs foode and cloathing, as though that he hadde cast vs out vpon the earth by fortune. For whosoever is certainly perswaded, that hee knoweth what the estate and condition of our life is, let not the same man doubt, but that he will very well provide for his necessities. Therefore as oft as any feare or carefullnesse for prouision shall assault vs, let vs remember that God hath a care of our life which he hath giuen vs.

26. *Beholde the fowles.* This is the remedy which I spake of: that is, that wee might learne to rest vpon the prouidence of God: for infidelitie is the mother of all these excessiue cares: therefore the onely meanes to amend this couetousnesse is, if wee embrace the promises of God, wherein hee witnesseth that he himselfe hath a care of vs. After this manner the Apottle minding to draw the faythfull from couetousnesse, confirmeth this doctrine, Heb. 13. 5. because it is written, I will not fayle thee; neither forsake thee. Therefore the summe is, that he exhorteth vs to trust in God, who neglecteth none of his creatures, though they be the meanest.

It is diligently to be noted, that hee sayth the heauenly father nourisheth the fowles. For although it is to be wondred at, how they sustaine their life, yet how many of vs do thinke that their life doth depend of that, that God doth vouchsafe to extend his prouidence euen to them? It that it be thoroughly fixed in our minds, that God doth with his hand minister nourishment to the fowles, our hope may be the easier, which are created after his image, & which are accounted amongst his childre. When he saith that the fowles do not sow, nor mow, he doth not in these woordes perswade vs to slouth and idlenesse: but onely meaneth

neth that though all helpes should cease, yet the onely prouidence of God shall be sufficient, which abundantly bestoweth vpon the beastes, whatsoeuer is needfull.

Luke for the fowles, nameth Rauens, alluding peraduenture to that place of the psal. 147. 9. who giueth foode to the young Rauens, that call vpon him. And some thinke that Dauid did especially speake of the Rauens: because that when at the first the olde ones haue forsaken them, it is of necessitie that they shoulde be fed of God. Hereby it appeareth, that Christes will was none other, then that he might teach his to cast their care vpon God.

27. Which of you by taking thought. Christ here condemneth an other fault, which is almost alwayes ioyned with the immoderate care of prouision: that is, that a mortall man taking vpon him more then is lawfull for him, doubteth not through sacrilegious boldnesse to passe his boundes. I know (sayth Jeremy, 10. 23. that the way of manne is not in himselfe, neither is it in man to walke and to direct his steps. And there is scarce the hundred man found, which dareth not promise himselfe any thing of his owne industry and power. Hereby it cometh to passe, that God being not regarded, they doe not doubt to attempt any thing, which challenge to themselves the prosperous successe of thinges. Christ that he might bridle his madde boldnesse, dooth say, that whatsoeuer pertayneth to the sustentation of our life, dependeth of the onely blessing of GOD. For it is as much as if he should haue sayd, menne do fondly weary themselves, when all their labours are superfluous and vaine, and all their cares doe come to no effecte, but as God blesteth them: the which is more plainly expessed by Luke, when Christ addeth: If you cannot doe that which is least, why are ye careful for the remnant? For by those woordes it sufficiently appeareth that he reproveth not onely the distruste, but the pride that men do challenge to their witte more then is meete.

Not Salomon in all his glory. The sense is, the goodnesse of God which shineth in hearbes and flowers, doeth excell whatsoeuer men can doe with their riches, power, or by any other meanes: so that the saythfull may account that they shall want nothing of perfect plenty, although all outward meanes be wanting, so that the onely blessing of God may flourish.

O yee of little sayth. Christ dooth not without a cause in this behalfe blame the want and weaknesse of sayth: for the more care we haue according to the glosenesse of our witte: so much more doth our infidelity bewray it selfe, except that all thinges fall out after our desire: therefore very many, which in great matters seeme to bee endued at least with an indifferent sayth, yet doe faint at the daunger of pouerty.

Matth. 6.

31. Therefore take no thought, saying, what shall we eate? or what shall we drinke? or wherewith shall wee be clothed?

32. For

Marke.

Luke. 12

29. Therefore aske not what yee shall eate, or what yee shall drinke, neither stand in doubt.

30. For all such thinges, the people of the worlde seeke for: and your father

32. For after all these things seeke the Gentiles: for your heavenly father knoweth that yee haue need of all these things.

33. But seeke yee first the kingdome of GOD, and his righteousnesse, and all these things shall bee ministred vnto you.

34. Care not then for the morow: for the morow shall care for it selfe: the day hath inough with his owne greife.

ther knoweth that yee haue neede of these thinges.

31. But rather seeke yee after the kingdome of GOD, and all these thinges shall be ministred vnto you.

32. Feare not little stocke for it is your fathers pleasure to giue you a kingdome.

He hath the same purpose here, that he had in the former doctrine: that the faithfull trusting in the fatherly care of God, and hoping to haue from him what things soeuer they thinke to bee necessary for them, shoulde not torment themselves with extreame carefulnes. He forbiddeth them to be careful, or to seeke, as Luke reporteth: that is, after their maner, which seeke heere and there, without respect of God, to whom onely they ought to bend themselves. Neither doe they rest at any time, but where they see abundance of increase: and they which doe not attribute to God the gouernment of the worlde, doe sweate and vex themselves with continuall disquietnes. When hee sayth that Gentiles doe seeke after all these things, hee vpbraideth them with their too grosse folly, from whence all such cares doe spring. For whereof commeth it to passe, that the vnbeleeuers do neuer rest in quiet state: but because they imagine that God is idle, and sleepeth in heauen, or at the least that hee looketh not vpon those things which appertaine vnto men, as vpon them, whome hee hath taken into his charge, and feedeth as his household? So by this comparison, he declareth that they haue profited ill, and doe not as yet vnderstande the first rudiments of godlines: which doe not looke with the eyes of their faith to the hand of God, secretly filled with aboundance of al good things, that they might patiently, and with quiet mindes from thence looke for their sustentation. Your heavenly father, sayth he, knoweth that you neede these things: as if he should haue sayd, all they that are so careful for their foode, do giue no more honour to the fatherly goodnes of God and his secret providence, then the vnfaithfull do.

L V. 29. *Stand not in doubt.* This clause answereth to the last sentence which is set downe in Mathew, Be not careful for the morow. For Christ reproveth an other fault, that men bending their will to prouide for themselves, would gladly imbrace five worlds. The word which Luke vseth doth properly signifie to looke aloft, as we doe commonly say, to make long discourses, for the intemperature of our flesh hath neuer enough, but that it would turne ouer the heauen and the earth a hundred times.

Heereof it commeth to passe, that they giue no place to GOD in his providence. Therefore vnder this title is reprehended too much curiositie or carefulnesse: because that through the same we procure our selues troubles without profite, and doe so become willingly wretches before the time. That Mathewe sayeth, *That the day hath inough with his owne greife*, appertayneth to this purpose, that the faithfull shoulde temper their cares,

least

least they desire to provide beyond the bounds of their vocation. For as it is sayd, euery care is not condemned : but that which wandereth through ouerthwart and vnmeasurable compasses, beyond boundes.

M A T. 33. *First seeke the kingdome of God.* He bridleth that too great care for foode by an other argument. For he reprobeth that grosse & slouthfull neglect, which the soule hath of the heavenly life. Therefore Christ teacheth vs, that it is preposterous, that men being borne to a better life, doe wholly occupie themselves in earthly things : And whosoever shall esteeme of the kingdome of God as the best will not exercise himselfe in providing for his living, but moderately : neyther is there any thing fitter to bridle the wantonnesse of the flesh, that it triumph not in the course of this present life, then the meditation of the heavenly life.

The word *righteousnesse* may as well be referred to God, as to his kingdome: for we know that the kingdome of God consisteth in righteousness, that is, in spirituall newnesse of life. When he sayth, that other things shall be ministred, he meaneth those things, which belong to this present life, are to be placed in the second place and ought to be set aser, or vnder the kingdome of God.

L V. 32. *Fear not my little flocke.* With this sentence Christ confirmeth that hope, whereunto he exhorteth his disciples : for howe can God deny vile and corrupt meate to his, whom he hath adopted to be heires of his kingdome? And purposely he calleth his by the name of a little flocke, least they shoulde therefore think themselves to be of lesse account with God: because that through their fewnesse, they are nothing accounted of before the world. The word which he useth, signifieth, that eternall life doth flow vnto vs out of the fountain of his free mercy. To this purpose also appertayneth the word of *giving*. And when Christ witnesseth openly, that God hath giuen vs a kingdome, and that for no other cause, but for that it so pleased him : it is heereby more then manifest, that it is obtayned by no desertes of workes. Therefore so ofte as the Lord sayeth vs vp to the hope of eternall life, we must remember that we may not feare the want of dayly foode.

Mathew. 7

Marke 4.

Luke. 6.

1. Iudge not, that ye be not iudged

2. For with what iudgement yee iudge, yee shall be iudged, and with what measure yee mete, it shall be measured to you againe

3. And why seeest thou the moate, that is in thy brothers eye, and perceiuest not the beame that is in thine owne eye?

4. Or how sayest thou to thy brother, suffer mee to cast out the moate out of thine eye, and behold a beame is in thine owne eye?

5. Hypo-

24. With what measure yee mete it shall be measured vnto you.

37. Iudge not, and ye shall not be iudged : condemne not, and yee shall not bee condemned : forgive, and yee shall bee forgiven.

38. Give, and it shall be giuen vnto you : a good measure, pressed downe, shaken together, & running ouer shall men giue into your bosome : for with what measure ye mete, with the same shall men mete to you againe.

41. And why seeest thou a moate in thy brothers eye : and considerest not the beame, that is in thine owne eye?

42. Either

4. Hypocrite, first cast out the beame out of thine owne eye, and then shalt thou see cleerely to cast out the moat out of thy brothers eye.

42. Either how canst thou say to thy brother: brother, let mee pull out the moate, that is in thine eye, when thou seest not the beame that is in thine owne eye? Hypocrite, cast out the beame that is in thine owne eye first, and then shalt thou see perfectly to pull out the moate that is in thy brothers eye.

1. *Iudge not.* Christ doeth not in these wordes precisely restraine from iudging: but his will was to heale that disease, which is settled almost in all. For wee see how all men doe flatter and spare themselves, and every man is a seuerer censor against others. And there is a certaine sweetnes in this sinne, so that there is almost no man that ycheth not with a desire to enquire out other mens fautes. All men doe confesse that it is a mischeife intolerable, that they which spare themselves in their own sinnes should be so malicious against their brethren. And in times past prophane men did also condemne it by many proverbes: yet it continueth in all ages, and also remaineth at this day: nay, there is added to it an other plague worse then that, that the most parte by condemning others, seeke to get themselves further libertie of sinning: This wicked delight in biting, carping, and slandering doth Christ restryne, when hee sayth, *Iudge not.* Neyther ought the faithfull to be so blind, that they should discern nothing: but onely that they should bridle themselves, that they bee no more desirous to iudge then is meete. For it cannot be otherwise but that who soever desireth to be iudge of his brethren, should be too extreame and rigorous. There is the like sentence in Iames, bee not many maisters. Yet he doth not restraine nor withdraw the faithfull from executing the office of teaching: but hee forbidde them to desire honour ambitiously. Therefore to iudge, doth signifie as much as to enquire curiously into other mens deedes. But first this disease doeth alwayes drawe with it this sinne, that we condemne euery light offence, as though it were a most greivous faule: then it breaketh out into a peruerse boldnes: so that we doe proudly iudge ill of euery matter, although it may be taken in good part.

Now wee see to what purpose Christes counsell tendeth: that is, that we bee not too desirous, or ouerthwart, or malicious, or els curious in iudging our neightours. But he that iudgeth by the word and law of the Lord, & directeth his iudgement according to the rule of charitie, doth alwayes begin his iudgement at himselfe, he doth obserue the right maner and order of iudging: where by it appeareth howe wickedly they abuse this testimonie of this moderation, which Christ setteth downe, vnder which pretence they desire to take away all difference of good and euill. For it is not onely lawfull for vs to condemne and reprove all sinnes, but also necessary: except we will wrangle with GOD himselfe, and abrogate his lawes, cut downe his iudgements, and ouerthrow his throne of iudgement. For his will is that we should declare his iudgement which he pronounceth of the deedes of men, we must onely retayne that modesty, that he may remayne the onely lawgiuer and iudge.

Least you be iudged. He denounceth a punishment against those rigorous censurs, which so much desire to list out the faults of others: that is, it shal come to passe, that they shall be nothing gentler entreated of others, but they shall finde the same extremitie exercised against themselves, which they haue executed against others. As there is nothing more deare or precious to vs then our name: so there is nothing more sharpe and bitter, then to be condemned and subiect to the reproches and infamie of men: and through our owne fault wee procure our selues that, which we of our owne nature doe so much abhorre. For which is hee amongst many, which doeth not search more narrowly into other mens deedes then is conuenient? which dealeth not hardlyer with light offences? which doth not more ouerthwartly improoue that which is of it selfe indifferent? And what is this else but to doe our diligence, to prouoke GOD to be a reuenger against vs, that hee againe may repay the like to vs. And though this be done by the iust vengeance of God, that they shoulde againe be punished, which haue iudged others: yet the Lorde doeth execute this punishment by men. For the iudgement of Chrysostome and others, which referre it to the life to come is wrested. For as Esayas 33. 1. threatneth that they shall bee spoyled, which haue spoyled others: so CHRISTE meaneth that there shall not want reuengers, which shall punish the wicked and slanderous men with the like payson or rigor. If that men cease, so that they escape punishment in the worlde, which haue bene too desirously bent to condemne their brethren, yet they shall not escape the iudgement of God.

In Luke there is set downe a promise. Forgiue, and yee shall bee forgiven: giue, and it shall be giuen vnto you, the meaning whereof is, that the Lord will bring to passe, that he that sheweth himselfe louing, gentle, and right towards his brethren, shall feele the same gentlenes of others towards himselfe, so that hee shall bee haandeled gently and friendly of others. But that which often falleth out to the children of God, to be recompenced with a most vniust reward, so that they are oppressed with many vniust slaunders, when as they haue hurt no mans name, but haue spared the faultes of their brethren doeth not disagree with the sentence of Christ. For wee knowe that those promises which appertayne to this present life, are not perpetuall, nor without exception.

Also though the Lord suffereth the innocency of his children to be oppressed, and almost ouerwhelmed: yet withall hee fulfilleth that which he speaketh in another place, that their vprightnesse shal shine as the morning. So his blessing alwayes exceedeth all their vniust slaunders. For so hee maketh the faithfull subiect to vniust reproches, that at the length hee may shew forth the goodnes of their cause.

Furthermore, the faithfull ones, how soeuer they desire to execute that, which is right towards their brethren: yet because they are sometime carryed with extreame rigour against their brethren, which eyther are innocent, or are not so much to bee blamed, they prouoke through their owne faulte the like iudgement against themselves. And though it may bee imputed to the vnstability of the worlde, that they

they doe not receiue measure pressed downe and running ouer: yet certainly they must in parte impute it vnto themselues: because there is no manne that hath so liberally nourished his brethren, as he ought.

3. *why seekest thou a moate.* Hee doth expressely reprove that faulte, which the hypocrites doe commonly committe. For when they are too quicke sighted in discerning other mennes faulces, and they doe not onely amplify them seuerely, but almost tragically, they cast their owne offences behind them: or els they are so wise in making them to seeme lesse, that euen in the most grosse offences they desire to seeme excusable. Therefore Christ reproveth both the offences, too curious searching, which groweth of the want of charity, while wee wil too scrupulously search out the finnes of the brethren, and the sparing flattery, where with wee couer and nourish our owne finnes.

MAT. 7. 6. *Give yee not that which is holy to dogges, neyther cast yee your pearles before swine: least they treade them vnder their feete, and turning againe all to rente you.* There is no cause why I should often rehearse, that Matthew setteth downe many shorte sentences, which are not to bee read: as in owne text depending vpon an other. For this doctrine doth not depend vpon that which went before, but is altogether of an other matter. For Christe admonisheth his Apostles, and in their person all the preachers of the Gospell, that they shoulde preserve and keepe the treasure of the heavenly wisdom only for the sonnes of God, and that they shoulde not throw it forth to the vnworthy and prophane contemners of God. But here ariseth a question: for afterward he commaundeth them to preach the Gospell to euery creature.

And Paule sayth, 1. Corinthians, 2. 16. that this preaching is to the reprobate a saour of death. And there is nothing more certaine, then that God commaundeth it daily to bee proposed as a testimonie to the vnfaithfull, that they might bee thereby made the more inexcusable: I answer, because the ministers of the Gospell, and they that are called to the office of teaching cannot discern betweene the children of GOD and swine, it is their parts to offer the doctrine of saluation generally to all. For although at the firste they shall see many stubborne and vnapt to bee taught: yet charitie doth not suffer vs presently to account of them, as castawayes and lost: for this is to be considered, that Christe calleth dogges and hogges, not all menne, that are wicked or voyde of the feare of God, and without true godlinesse: but them which by certaine tokens doe shewe a stubborne contempt of God, so that the disease may appeare incurable.

In an other place Christe opposeth dogges against the electe people of God, & them of the household of faith, when he sayth, it is not good to take the childrens bread, and to gieve it vnto dogs: & here he vnderstandeth dogges and swine, which being too corrupted with a wicked contempt of God, wil not admit nor abide any medicine. Hereby it appeareth how wickedly they do wrest the words of christ, which thinke that he restraineth the doctrine of the gospel, to those only, which are apt to be taught, & wel prepared. For what shuld be done, if the godly teachers should call no man, but him that now by his obedience proueth

the grace of God? but by nature wee all are rather wicked, and bent to stubbornesse. Wherefore the remedy of saluation is to be denyed to none but them that do sithily refuse the same offered vnto them, that it may appeare that they are reprobate, and damned of themselues: as Paul speaketh of Heretikes, Tit. 3. 11. But there are two causes, why Christe forbadde that his Gospell shoulde be proposed to the desperate contemners. For it is a manifest profanation of the miniters of God, if we submit them to the reproachfull skornes of the wicked. Christ also minded to comfort his disciples, that they shoulde not cease to bestow their labour in teaching the Gospell to the electe of God, though they should see the same ouerthwartly refused by the wicked and prophane men: as if he should haue sayd, least this incompareable treasure shoulde waxe vile, and be of no account, the swine and dogges are to be driuen from it. But these titles are to be noted, wherewith he adorneth the doctrine of saluation, Christe calleth it a holy thing, and compareth it to pearles. And hereby wee gather howe much wee ought to esteeme of it. *Least they treade it vnder their feete*, Christe seemeth to make a difference betweene swine and dogges: attributing a beattly dulnesse to the swine, and madnes to dogges. And certainly experience teacheth, that there are two such sortes of contemners of God. For example sake: whatsoeuer is spoken in the scripture of the corruption of mans nature, of the free iustification, of eternall election, many turne it eyther to carelesnesse, or to the wantonnesse of the flesh, such are aptly & worthily accounted swine. And others doe rend the doctrine & the miniters of the same, with sacreligious raylings: as though it should ouerthrow the desire of well doing, the feare of God, and all care of saluation. Therefore though Christ doth by both the names signifye the vncurable enemies of the word of God, yet by these two similitudes he briefly sheweth what some of them do differ from others.

Matth. 7.

7. *Aske, and it shall bee giuen you: seeke, and yee shall finde: knocke, and it shall bee opened vnto you.*

8. *For who soeuer asketh, receiueth: & he that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.*

9. *For what man is there among you, which if his sonne aske him breade, would giue him a stone?*

10. *Or if hee aske fish, will hee giue him a serpent?*

11. *If*

Marke.

3. *And hee sayde vnto them which of you shall haue a friend, and shall goe to him at midnight, & say to him friend, lend me three loaves?*

6. *For a friende of mine is come out of the way to me, and I haue nothing to set before him.*

7. *And hee within should answer and say, trouble me not, the dore is now shut, and my children are with me in bedde: I cannot rise to giue them thee.*

8. *I say vnto you, though hee would not arise and giue him, because hee is his friend, yet doubtles because of his importunitie, he would rise, and giue him as many as hee needed.*

11. If yee then which are euill can giue to your children good giftes, how much more shall your father which is in heauen, giue good thinges to them that aske him.

9. And I say vnto you, Aske, and it shall be giuen you : seeke and yee shall finde: knocke and it shall be opened to you.

10. For euery one that asketh, receiueth: and hee that seeketh, findeth: and to him that knocketh, it shall be opened.

11. If a sonne shall aske bread of any of you, that is a father, will hee giue him a stone? or if he aske a fish, will he giue him a serpent?

12. Or if hee aske an egge, will hee giue him a scorpion?

13. If yee then which are euill can giue good giftes vnto your children, how much more shall your heauenly father giue the holy Ghost to them that desire him?

7. *Aske.* This is an exhortation to prayer: and because that in this exercise of godlinesse, which we should haue an especiall care of, wee are so slowe and slouthfull, Christ vrgeth this matter by speaking it three maner of wayes. For his speach is not in vaine, when he sayth *aske, seeke, knocke*: but hee applyeth himselfe to stirre vp our slouthfulnesse, least the doctrine should waxe cold. To the same purpose also belong the promises which are added, *ye shall finde, it shall be giuen you, and it shall be opened to you.* For nothing shall better incourage vs to pray, then a certaine assurance of obtayning. For it can not be that they should pray diligently, that doubt: yea prayer without fayth, is but a vaine and sporting ceremonie. Christ therefore that hee might effectually stirre vs vp to this part of our dutie, hee doeth not onely commaund vs what wee ought to doe: but promiseth that our prayers should not be in vaine. And this is diligently to bee noted: first, that wee might know that this lawe of prayer is appointed and prescribed vnto vs, that wee might bee certainly perswaded, that God is so mercifull to vs, that hee will heare our desires. Then, so oft as wee prepare our selues to prayer, or as oft as wee feele that wee are not earnest inough in this desire to pray, that we should remember this so louing a bidding, wherein Christ testifieth vnto vs, God his fatherly affection. So it shall come to passe, that euery of vs inioying the grace of Christ, may boldly pray, and freely call vpon God, as Paule teacheth Ephes. 3. 12. And because wee are more readie to distrust then is meete, Christ repeateth the promise in diuerse words, that hee might also reprove this faulte. But hee vseth the Metaphor of seeking, because that wee thinke those thinges which wee haue neede of to bee farre from vs: and of knocking, because that the fancies of our fleshe doe imagine, that those thinges are shut vp from vs, which we haue not ready at hand.

8. *For who soeuer asketh receiueth.* Some thinke it is a prouerbe gathered of the common trade of life: yet I doe more willingly encline to the con-

trary parte: for that Christe offereth the fauour of the Father to them that pray: as if hee should haue sayde, God is willing and ready to heere vs, if that we pray, and that there are great riches layd vp for vs, if that we doe aske them. By which wordes hee declareth that they doe suffer iust punishments for their slothfulnesse, which wanting things necessary, doe not seeke this remedie for their want.

It is certayne, that often when the faithfull doe sleepe, God waketh for their saluation, that he may preuent their requestes. For there is nothing more wretched then wee are, if in so great a weakenes, or rather a slothfulnes, he should waite for our prayers, if he should not looke vpon vs in so much carelesnesse of vs. Nay, he is not perswaded by any other then by himselfe, to giue vs fryth, which should preuent our praier both in order and in time. But because Christ speaketh heere to his Disciples, he doth onely teach how the heavenly Father would make vs partakers of his giftes. Therefore, although hee doth giue vs all thinges freely, yet that he might exercise our faith, hee commandeth vs to pray, that he might grant to our requestes, those thinges, which come of his owne goodnes.

9. *What man is there among you.* This is a comparison from the lesse to the greater. First Christ opposeth the malice of men to the great goodnes of God. And selfe loue maketh vs malicious: for while euery man is too much addicted to himselfe, hee despiseth and neglecteth others. But fatherly loue ouercōmeth this fault, so that men forgetting themselues, doe more liberally bestow vpon their children. And from whence proceedeth this, but because that God from whom all fatherlinesse descendeth, Ephe. 3. 15. powreth this portion of his goodnesse into their heartes? If that a few drops of loue in man doe so much preuayle to doe well, what is to be hoped for out of the sea it selfe, which canne neuer bee drawne drie? Can GOD himselfe bee straight, which doeth so open the heartes of men? yet heere must bee considered that saying of Esayas 49. 15. Although a mother should forget her children, yet the Lord will be like himselfe, so that he will alwayes shew himselfe to be a father.

11. *Good giftes.* Christ did of purpose vse these words, least that the faithfull in prayer should loose the raine too much to fond and euill desires. Wee know how intemperate and presumptuous our flesh is in this behalfe for there is nothing that we doe not aske of God: & except that he yeeld to our folly, wee fret and fume against him. Christ therefore maketh our requestes subiect to the will of God, that he should not giue vnto vs any thing, but that which he knoweth profitable for vs. Wherefore let vs not thinke that he hath no care of vs; so oft as hee granteth not our requests: because it is in him to iudge what is conuenient for vs.

But now, because all our affections are blinde, the rule of our prayer must be taken out of the word of God, neyther are wee meete to iudge of so weighty a matter. Therefore, whosoever desireth to come to God with faithfull prayer, let him learne to bridle his heart, that hee aske not any thinge, but according to his will, as Iames teacheth, 4. 3. of his Epistle.

• Luke in the last clause for good giftes, placeth the holy Ghost, not excluding other benefites, but shewing what is especially to bee desired. For that ought alwayes to be in our minde, like first the kingdome of God, and other things shall then be ministred vnto you. Wherefore it becometh the children of God, to that ende that they might prepare themselves rightly to prayer, to put off earthly affections, and to ascend to the meditation of spirituall life. And so it shall come to passe, that they shall make lesse account of meat and cloath, then of the seale and pledge of their adoption: But when God shall giue for precious a treasure, he will not deny others that are lesse.

L V. 5. Which of you shall haue a friende. Luke addeth this similitude, where of Matthew maketh no mention, and the meaning is: there is no cause why the faythfull should faint in their heartes, if they do not presently obtaine their desires, or if that seeme hard to be obtained, which they doe desire. For if importunitie of demanding doth wrest out of men that, which they would not willingly doe, there is no cause why wee should doubt, but that God will bee entreated of vs, if wee constantly continue in prayer, and that our mindes eyther through delay or difficultie waxe not weary.

Matthew 7.

12. Therefore whatsoeuer yee woulde that men should doe vnto you, euen so do yee to them: for this is the law and the prophets.

13. Enter in at the straight gate: for it is the wide gate and broad way that leadeth to destruction: & many there be, which go in thereat.

14. Because the gate is straight, and the way narrow, that leadeth vnto life, and fewe there be that finde it.

Marke.

Luke. 6.

31. And as yee woulde that men should doe to you, so do yee to them.

It is in vaine to shew howe this dependeth of the former, sith that often in such short sentences, these clauses doe abounde. I sayde before, that Matthew doth not reporte one only Sermon of Christes: but out of diuers sermons hee gathereth the summe of the doctrine. Therefore this sentence is to bee read by it selfe, wherein Christe instructeth his disciples to equity, & setteth downe a shorte and an easie definition of the same: that wee might knowe that so many contentions doe raigne in the worlde, and that men doe hurt one another so many wayes, for no other cause, but because that willingly and willingly they treade equitie vnder their feete: and yet every one would haue the same straightly obserued to wardes himselfe. Where it standeth vpon our owne profit, there is none of vs that cannot distinctly & subtilly declare what is right. Therefore sith all men doe shew themselves ready teachers of righteousness for their owne commodity: how cometh it to passe, that the same knowledge is not ready, when either the profit or the losse of other men cometh in question: but because wee are onely wise for our selues, & no man provideth for his neighbours. And not to onely, but maliciously, and of set purpose, we close our eyes at the rule of equity, which shineth in our hearts.

Therefore Christ teacheth that euery man may bee a rule vnto himselfe of iust and vpright dealing towards his neighbours. if he woulde perfourme that to others, which he requireth to be done vnto himselfe. So he confuteth all vaine pretenses, which menne imagine to couer, or to counterfeit their owne vnrighteousnesse. For without doubt perfecte equity shoulde raigne amongst vs, if wee were as faythfull working (that I may so speake) disciples of charitie, as wee are ready teachers to haue others to doe to vs.

For this is the lawe and the Prophetes. Christe doeth not meane that this one poynnt of doctrine is onely deliuered in the lawe and the Prophetes: but whatsoever is there commaunded concerning charitie, and what lawes and exhortations are there set down for the maintenaunce of righteousness, are all referred to this purpose. The meaning thereof is, that hee satisfieth the second table, if hee shew himselfe in that sort to others, as hee desireth others shoulde shew themselves to him: as if hee shoulde haue sayd, there should be no need of long and tedious disputations, if this simplicitie were maintained, and men should not with a preposterous loue of themselves blot out that equitie, which is engrauen in their heartes.

13. *Enter in at the strait gate.* Because there is nothing more against the flesh, then the doctrine of Christ, no man shall at any time well profite in the same: but hee that learneth to gather his owne senses and all his affections as into a narrow straite, that they may keepe themselves with in those straites, in which the heavenly maister brideleth our wantonnesse. Because men do willingly flatter themselves, leape and runne out of order: therefore Christ doeth here admonish his disciples, that they should prepare themselves, as to a strait & thorny iourney. But because it is hard to restraine our lustes fro this vnbrideled & wandring folly, hee mittigeth this bitterness with a comfortable reward, when he sayeth, by the narrow gate and way we enter into life.

Againe, least being caught with the baights of a lycentious and a dissolute life, we should wander whether the pleasure of the flesh doth draw vs: he saith, that they doe runne headlong to death, which hadde rather goe through the wide way and broad gate, then to goe through the straites, which lead to life. But hee sayth expressly, that many doe run through the wide way: because that menne do ouerthrow one an other, by peruerse and euill examples. For whereof commeth it to passe, that all menne doe wittingly and willingly without all care, cast themselves headlong: but because they doe not thinke that they shall perishe while they perishe with a great company? And on the other side, the small number of the faythfull doth make many careless: for wee are hardly brought to renounce the worlde, and to frame our selues and our liues after the manners of a fewe. For we thinke it an absurde thing to pull vs from the multitude, as if wee were not a parte of mankind.

But though the doctrine of Christe dooth holde vs as bondmenne, bringeth our life into a streight way, seperateth vs from the multitude, and ioyneth vs to a fewe companions: yet this straightnesse ought to be no hinderaunce vnto vs, that wee shoulde any whitte the lesse strue after life.

But it doeth sufficiently appeare by Luke, that Christe sayde this at an other time, and not then when he vttered those paradoxes of the blessed life (which we haue seene before,) and deliuered to them an order of prayer And that is it which I haue touched so oft. These things which are set downe by the other Euangelistes, according to the order of the history, are gathered together by Matthew into one summe, that so it might the better appeare, how Christe instructed his disciples. Therefore I thought it meete to adde all the place of Luke which agreeth to this matter. For when I shall diligently admonish the readers of the course of time which Luke obserueth, I hope they will graunt me pardon if in gathering the doctrine I be not more curious then Matthew.

Matthewe.

Marke.

Luke. 13.

23. Then sayde one vnto him, Lord are there fewe that shall be saued? And he sayd vnto them.

24. Striue to enter in at the straight gate, for many I say vnto you, will seeke to enter in, and shall not be able.

23. Then sayd. Although Matthew rehearseth this answere of Christ in one texte, with ether sentences spoken to the people, yet I thinke that he had occasion giuen him to speake this, by this present question. Furthermore, the occasion that moued that this question shoulde bee asked seemeth to bee, because that Christe who professed himselfe to be the authour of life, coulde scarce gather him a fewe disciples. And he might seeme to cōtemne the whole Church, a small company of menne onely excepted. But outwardly the whole people which regarded not the doctrine of Christ, but refused him altogether, seemed to be adopted of God as heires of life. And we oftentimes do doubt the same, so oft as wee behold the ouerthwart estate of the world. What meaneth this, that the greater part followeth a way contrary and disagreeing to the Gospell? Therefore Christe speaking to all, exhorteth them to striue to enter in at the straight gate. By which wordes Christ meant to drawe his disciples from foolish curiosity, which hindereth and stayeth many, which looke about whether any other doe ioyne themselves to them, as though they woulde not bee saued but with a great company. In that he commaundeth to striue or to endeouour, he meaneth that they cannot come to euerlasting life without great and many difficulties. therefore let the saythfull rather bestowe their studie vpon this, then be too curious about the multitude that go astray.

24. For many will seeke to enter. This is therefore added, least we should be deceiued with a vaine hope, as if many companions should helpe vs. For as flesh is glad to flatter it selfe, many do promise themselves an easie way to life, which in the meane season do please themselves with euery thing. So others doe againe deceiue others, that they sleepe in a wicked securitie. Christ that he might shake off such delights from his disciples, affirmeth that they shall be excluded, which promise now vnto theselues a certaine possession of life.

Matthew.

Marke.

Luke. 13.

25. When the good man of the house is risen vp,

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and

and hath shutte to the doore, and begin to stande without, and to knocke at the doore, sayi. g. Lord; Lord; open to vs, and he shal answere, and say vnto you, I know you not whence you are.

26. Then shall ye beginne to say, wee haue eaten and drunke in thy presence, and thou haste taught in our streetes.

27. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence you are: depart from mee all ye workers of iniquitie.

28. There shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth, when ye shall see Abraham & Isaac, & Iacob, and all the Prophets in the kingdome of God, and your selues thrust out at doores.

29. Then shall come many from the East, & from the West, & from the North, and from the South, and shall sit at the table in the kingdome of God.

30. And beholde there are laste, which shall be first, and there are first which shall be last.

25. When the goodman of the house is risen, Although these thinges were spoken after another time, as I layd euen nowe, yet I had rather to haue respect of the doctrine then of the time. For this is no small helpe to the vnderstanding, if those may be read together in one text, which do agree together in one sence. Because that Christ hadde affirmed that the gate is not opened to many which desired to enter into heauen. Now he sayth that they shall profit nothing, although they occupy a place in the Church: because that God shal at length rise in iudgement, that he may exclude out of his kingdome, all them that vsurpe a place amongst them of his houshoulde. And he vseth the similitude of a householder: who if hee vnderstoode that some of his wicked and wanton seruantes should steale out by night, and leaue the house open to theeues: hee himselfe ariseth and locketh the gate: and will not let in those wandring and night straying menne, which doe out of season wander by the high wayes. Further, in these woordes hee admonisheth vs to take occasion while it is offered. For so long as the Lord calleth vs vnto him, wee as it were haue a gate sette open for vs into heauen: but the greater part doth not vouchsafe to stire a foote. Therefore Christ pronounceth that the gate shall at the length bee shut, and so they shall bee in daunger to be shut out which waite for company.

26. Thou haste taught in our streetes. Christ expressly excepteth, that it shall profit the Iewes nothing, that he came neare vnto them, and that he familiarly offered himselfe that they should enioy him, except they answere at the day when they are called. But he doth not prosecute that similitude. For, speaking of a householder, hee doeth plainly without a figure declare himselfe to be the iudge: and this doeth not agree to any other then vnto him selfe. Thou haste taught in our streetes: that is, that the Iewes shoulde not through their negligence loose that saluation which they might now obtaine.

28. When yee shall see Abraham. When as the Iewes hadde nothing like vnto

vnto the holy fathers, yet they would vainely brag of that stocke: neyther was ther any thing so vsuall amongst the, as to abuse the title of the Church: Christ testifieth that this degenerate people, which departed from the faith and godlines of the fathers, are estranged from the kingdome of God. And heerein is containyd a secret reproofe, because that they which desire to haue companions in seeking saluation, did not rather endeouour to adioyne themselues to Abraham the Prophets, and the holy fathers, then seeke about for their equals, which by their examples were fallen farre out into innumerable corruptions. As if hee should haue sayd, if you doe now neglect to enter in at the straight gate, because the multitude of them which goe astray doth come behinde you, doe you not see how you are seperated from the companie of the faithfull, while you doe linke your selues to the companie of the vnfaithfull? If that the sight of the world doth now blind your eyes, this sorrowfull case shall bee taken from you at the last day, but too late. For then you shall know that you and your like are strangers from the kingdome of God, and that you haue not any thing commo with Abraham.

29. *They shall come from the East.* It is an amplification gathered hereof, that the Iewes being reiecte (which thought themselves onely to bee the lawfull heires of God) the Gentiles should be set in their place, that they may receiue the life promised to Abraham and his stocke. And hee opposeth the Gentiles against them, that he might prick them forward as with a godly ieaousie to faith. Euen as Paul Romanes 11. 14. writeth that it should be an ornament of his ministerie, if he might prouoke them of his owne countrie and flesh to such an emulation. And so it was necessarie that the Iewes should be pricked when as they pleasing themselves too much, did proudly contemne God and all his giftes. But because that Mathew hath this sentence againe a little after, I doe now touch the same the more sparingly.

30. *Behold there are last.* Christ useth these words oftentimes, as wee shall see other where, but in a diuerse sense. In this place hee meaneth nothing else: but to ouerthrow the vaine confidence of the Iewes: which when all the world was forsaken, were chosen of God, being placed in this dignitie, imagined that God was bound to them: For this cause Christ telleth them that their lot shall bee shortly altered, so that the Gentiles which were then as outcastes should haue the cheif roome: And the Iewes being put from their honour, should not hold the lowest corner in the Church.

Mathew. 7.

Marke.

Luke. 6.

15. Beware of false Prophets, which come to you in sheepes clothing, but inwardly they are rauening wolues.

16. Ye shall know them by their fruites, doe men gather grapes of thornes? or figges of thistles?

17. So every good tree, bringeth forth good fruit, & a corrupt tree bringeth forth euill fruit.

18. A

43. For it is not a good tree that bringeth forth euill fruit: neyther an euill tree, that bringeth forth good fruit.

44. For every tree is knowne by his owne fruit: for neyther of thornes gather men figges, nor of bushes gather they grapes.

45. A

18. *A good tree cannot bring forth euill fruite: neyther can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruite.*

19. *Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruite, is hewen downe and cast into the fire.*

20. *Therefore by their fruites ye shall know them.*

21. *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart bringeth forth good, and an euill man out of the euill treasure of his heart, bringeth forth euil, for of the abundance of the heart his mouth speaketh.*

15. Beware. Christ teacheth in these wordes that his Church shoulde bee subiect to diuers deceits, and therefore it would be dangerous least many should fall from the faith, except they bend themselues to take heede. Wee know how ready men are to vanitie, and so they doe not onely of nature desire to be deceiued, but all men seeme to be wise to deceine themselues. And Sathan also a wonderfull craftes man in deceiuing, ceaseth not to lay snares wherein hee may entangle the simple and vnwarie. But the Iewes did hope that they should haue a pleasant estate vnder the kingdome of Christ, free from all trouble and vexation. Therefore he admonisheth his disciples, if they desire to stande fast, that they should prepare themselues to auoide the subtil sleights of Sathan. For it is the will of the Lord (as I haue already sayd) to exercise his Church with continuall warfare in this worlde. Wherefore, that we may continue his disciples vnto the ende, it sufficeth not onely that wee bee taught, and that we submit our selues to be gouerned by his word: but because that wee shall bee daily assaulted by Sathan, it is necessary that our faith be armed to resist. And it is the cheifest thing, if wee suffer our selues to be gouerned of the good and faithfull ministers of Christ: but because that on the contrary side there doe arise false teachers, except wee doe watch diligently, and bee armed with constancie, wee shall be easily led from the flocke. To this purpose also pertainerth that saying of Christe, Iohn 10. 3. The sheepe doe heare the voyce of the shepheard: and they will not heare a stranger, but flee from him. Whereby wee also gather that there is no cause why the faithfull shoulde bee discouraged in their mindes, or troubled, while the wolues do breake into the fold of Christ: while the false Prophets doe endeauour with false doctrines to ouerthrowe the pure faith of Christ, but they ought rather to be stirred vp to set diligent watch. For Christ doth not in vaine bidde vs beware, wherefore if our owne slouthfulness doth not circumuent vs, we shall easily escape all his deceits. And certainly without this hope we should not be bold nor couragious to take heed. When we know now that the Lord would not haue deceiued vs by the inuasions of Sathan, let vs goe forward without teare, asking of him the spirit of discretion, by whom as he sealeth the beleefe of his truth in our hearts, so, that he would reueale the deceites and subtilties of Sathan, least wee bee deceiued. When Christ layth they come in sheepes clothing, which are inwardly wolues he meaneth that they want not faire pretences, if wee doe not with wisdom sift them thoroughly.

16. *By their fruites.* If this note of difference had not beene added, the authoritie of all teachers might without exception haue come in question. For if a deadly daunger were to be feared in the teachers, and that there were no meanes to auoide it, then all of necessitie shoulde bee suspected.

sted, and there shoulde not bee a better remedy, then for all men to shut their eares. And we see prophane menne pretend this danger, that they might without punishment reiecte all kinde of doctrine, the weake also and the rude doe stand in doubt. Christ therefore least that his Gospel and the sincere & faithfull ministers of the same should loose the reuerence due, commaundeth that they should iudge of false Prophets by their fruites. Wherefore the Papistes are too foolish & corrupt, which that they might stirre vpp euy against vs, do precisely cast forth this sentence of Christ: beware of false Prophets: and with their outcries they make the simple, not knowing any cause why, rashly to abhorre vs. But it is necessary that whosoever desireth to obey the counsell of Christ, should iudge wisely and discretely: for we do not onely willingly confesse, that false Prophets should be taken heed off, but we do also diligently and earnestly exhort the simple that they should beware of them. Onely wee admonish them, that according to the rule of Christ they doe first certainly know them, least the simple doe beare the punishment of their rashnesse in refusing the pure worde of God: for there is great difference betweene carefull heede taking, & preposterous loathing. But the Papistes do too wickedly abrogate the commaundement of Christe, which by casting forth a false feare, do drue the miserable soules from teaching. Therefore let this bee first considered, that they which through feare do refuse or flee the doctrine which they know not, doe therein wickedly, and make small accounte of this commaundement of Christe. Now remaineth to be seene, what fruites Christ noteth, and in my iudgement they are deceiued which restrayne it to the life. For this triall were very vncertaine, when as the most wicked deceiuers doe imitate a most fained holinesse, and also pretende I knowe somewhat shewes of most straight life. I grant that their hypocrisie shall be at the length reuealed, because there is nothing more harde then to counterfeit vertue. But Christ woulde not submitte his doctrine to so vnrighteous and base a iudgement, that it shoulde bee measured by the life of menne. Therefore vnder their fruites he comprehendeth the maner of teaching, and that is the chiefe. For thereby Christ prooueth that hee was sent of God, because hee seeketh not his owne glory, but his fathers which sent him. Iohn 7.18. If any doe object that fewe haue that capacitie giuen them to iudge good fruites from euill, I answere as I sayd euen now, that the faithfull when need is, shall never want the spirite of discretion, so that they distrust in themselves, and bid their owne vnderstanding farewell, and giue themselves wholly to bee governed of him. In the meane while let vs remember that all doctrines are to be brought to be tryed by the worde of God, and therefore to bee ruled by the analogie of fayth in iudging false Prophets. Then must bee considered what God enioyneth to his Prophets and ministers of his word, for thereby may their faythfulnesse be easily discerned. As for example sake, if wee propose vnto vs. those things which Paule requireth in bishops, that onely description shall suffice to condemne the whole dunghil of popery: for the Popish sacrificers seeme to doe their diligence to set vpp a contrary shew. Wherefore it is no meruaile if they forbid men to iudge of false Prophets. But this place doeth evidently shewe that titles are nothing to bee accounted off, no, nor the calling it selfe is of any estimation, except they be called pastours, and being called to the of-
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sice of teaching, do faithfully follow their calling. *Doe men gather.* By those proverbes which were then commonly vsed, & receiued by the consent of all men, doth Christ proue that no man can be deceiued by false Prophets, but he which wil vvolingly be blinde. Because the fruits doe openly make triall which are the faithfull seruants of God, and the false labourers, euen as the fruites doe shewe the tree. The sentence in Luke seemeth to be generall, whereby Christ teacheth that euery man may be iudged by his fruites, as a tree is known by his fruit. For after hee had set downe a reproofe against hypocrites, which see a moat in the eye of an other, not seeing a beame in their owne, he presently addeth. *For an euill tree cannot bring forth,* and that causall word (*For*) seemeth to ioyne two sentences together. But because it is certaine that Luke in that sixth chapter, rehearseth diuers sermons of Christe, it may bee also that he doeth briefly touch that which Matthew setteth downe more fully. Neither doe I rest vpon that causall aduerbe, which is oftentimes in other places superfluous, which may also appeare by that clause: for Luke so concludeth this speech, *A good man out of the good treasure of his heart.* Neither doe I doubt, but that Christ doth plainly set downe what maner of iudgement this should be, which he commandeth to be had by the fruites: that is, that the saythfull should diligently examine what fruit they bring forth into the worlde, which professe themselves to bee the seruants of God: as if he should haue sayd, titles doe smally auaille, vntill he that speaketh shall proue indeed that he is sent from God: yet I do not deny but that this place may be applied to the generall doctrine. And certainly the last clause, namely: *that of the abundance of the heart the mouth speaketh,* doeth reach further then to the false prophetes, seeing that it is so common a prouerbe. If any doe obiekt that mens tongues do often lie, so that they speake best which are worst affectionate: I answere, Christ doth here teach simply, that which is most commonly vsed. For although hypocrites do pretende one thing in wordes, which they doe neuer thinke in their heart: yet that letteth not but that the tongue may be aptly and very well called the figure or shew of the minde.

Matthew. 7.

21. *Not every one that sayeth vnto me Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdome of heauen, but hee that doeth my fathers will which is in heauen.*
 22. *Many will say to me in that day, Lorde, Lorde, haue we not by thy name prophesied? and by thy name cast out deuilles? and by thy name done many great workes?*
 23. *And then will I professe to them, I neuer knewe you, departe from me, yee that worke iniquitie.*

Marke.

Luke. 6.

46. *But why caly me master, master, & do not thinges that I speake.*

21. *Not every one that sayeth.* Christe stretcheth his speech further. Neyther spake hee onely of false Prophetes, which breake in amongst the flocke, to steale and to deuoure: but of hirelings, which vnder the countenance of shepheardes doe deceitfully thruste in themselves, and yet haue

have no affection of godlines. And although this doctrine comprehendeth all hypocrites what degree or place soever they are in: yet he doth properly touch false teachers which seeme to excell aboue others. Neyther doth he direct his speech to them alone, that he might waken them out of their securitie, wherein they lie as drunken men, but hee also admonisheth the faithfull, that they giue not to such disguised people, more then is meete. In summe, hee foretelleth that as soone as the doctrine of the Gospell shall begin to bring forth fruite, so that it shall haue many disciples, there shall be many not onely of the common sort which shall falsly and hypocritically giue their name to the Gospell, but also amongst the pastours, there shall bee the same falthoode, so that they shall denie in deedes and life that which they professe with mouth. Therefore who soeuer desireth to be accounted amongst his disciples, he must doe his diligence that he may sincerely and from his heart addict himselfe to meditate newnesse of life. In Like there is a generall reproofe, *But why call ye me master, maister.* But because this corruption doth for the most part spring from dissembling teachers, and doth the more easily spread from them to the whole body: therefore in Mathew Christ doth namely inueigh against them. To doe the will of the father, doth not onely signifie philosophically to frame their life and maners to a rule of vertues, but also to beleue in Christ, as it is sayd in Iohn 6 40. Therefore in these wordes faith is not excluded, but is established as the spring from whence the rest doe flow.

22. *Many shall say vnto mee.* Christ citeth againe the hypocrites before his iudgement seate, as we sayd euen now out of Luke: for so long as they occupie a place in the Church, they doe partly flatter themselues, and also they do partly deceiue others. Therefore he sayth that there shall be a day wherein he will purge his floore, and the weedes and chaffe shalbe seperate from the pure wheat To prophesie in Christes name, is by his authoritie, and as it were by his gouernement to execute the office of teaching. For prophecie in my iudgement is taken in this place generally, as in 1. Corinthians 14. hee might haue simply vsed the worde of preaching: but purposely hee vsed that which was of greater estimation, that he might the better declare that the outward profession is nothing worth, how excellently soeuer men do account of it. So to work miracles in the name of Christ, is nothing els then to do miracles by his pover, ayd, gouernement and leading. For although the name of works is sometime restrained to one sorte or kinde of miracles, yet in this place and in many others, hee noteth all miracles.

23. *I will professe to them.* By this speech Christ seemeth to allude to the vaine boasting wherein hypocrites doe now at this day vaunt themselues, as if hee should haue sayd, while they confessed me with their tongue, they thought that they had discharged their dutie well: and now a holow confession of my name with their tongue is heard. But I in like sorte confesse againit them, that what soeuer they professe, is vaine and lying.

But what meaneth this confession of Christ, that he neuer accounted them amongst the number of his disciples: no not euen when they gloried that they were the pillars of the Church?

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Therefore hee commandeth them to cease, which vnder a deceitfull title haue for a time stolne an vniust possession to their house. It seemeth that Paule tooketh out this sermon of Christ that which he sayth. 2. Tim. 2. 19. The Lord knoweth who are his, let euery one that calleth on the name of the Lord depart from iniquitie. For the first clause tendeth to this purpose, that the weak should not faint nor be troubled at the falling away of some, whose name was greates and famous. For he sayth that they were neuer knowne of the Lorde, though they dazeled the eyes of menne with a vaine shewe. Then hee exhorteth all them which would bee accounted amongst the Disciples of Christ, that they should speedely withdraw themselves from iniquitie, least that Christ do driue them away out of his sight, when he shall seperate the lambes from the goates.

Mathew. 7

24. Who soeuer then heareth of me these wordes, and doth the same, I will liken him to a wise manne which hath built his house on a rocke.

25. And the raine fell, and the flouds came, and the windes blew, and beat vpon that house, and it fell not, for it was grounded on a rocke.

26. But who soeuer heareth these my wordes, and doth them not, shall be likened to a foolish manne which hath builded his house vpon the sand.

27. And the raine fell, and the floudes came, and the winds blew, and beate vpon that house, and it fell, and the fall thereof was great.

28. And it came to passe when Iesus had ended these wordes, the people were astonished at his doctrine.

29. For he taught them as one hauing authoritie, and not as the Scribes.

Marke

Luke. 6.

47. Who soeuer commeth to me, and beareth my wordes, and doth the same, I wil shew you to whom he is like.

48. He is like a man which built a house, & digged deepe and laid the foundation on a rocke, and when the waters arose, the floud beate vpon that house, and coulde not shake it for it was grounded vpon a rocke.

49. But hee that heareth and doeth not, is like a man that built a house vpon the earth, without foundation, against which the floud did beate and it fell by and by, and the fall of that house was great.

24. Who soeuer then. Because for the most part it is hard to discern the true professors of the gospell from the counterfeite, Christ by an apt similitude sheweth whereir they differ most. For he proposeth two houses, whereof the one was built without a foundation, and the other had a good foundation. For when there was to the shew the same outward appearance in them both, the first being beaten with wind and stormes, or shaken with floudes, doth presently fall, but the latter shall stand fast vpon his sure foundation against all violence. Christ therefore compareth the vaine and windie profession of the Gospell, to a beautiful, but no sound building, which though it were set vp to the shewe, yet it was readie to fall at euery moment, because it lacked a foundation. Therefore Paul commandeth vs to be well & thoroughly grounded in Christ, and to haue deepe

deepe rootes leaſt we be caried away at euery blaſt. In ſumme, this is the purpoſe, true godlines cannot be diſcerned from counterſeite holines, vntill an examination and triall doe come: for temptations where with we are tried, are like to ſtoudes and ſtormes, which doe eaſily beate downe vſtable mindes, whoſe lightnes is not perceiued in a calme and quiet time. *Heareth theſe wordes.* The relatiue *Theſe*, doth not note one kinde of doctrine, but the whole ſumme of doctrine. For the Goſpell, except it be deeply fixed in our minds (he ſayth) is like vnto a wall which is built high, and is ſtrengthened with a foundation. Therefore it is as much as if he ſhould haue ſayd, that is in deede the true faith which taketh deepe rootes in the heart, and reſteth vpon an earneſt and a conſtant zeale as vpon a foundation, ſo that it yeeldeth not to temptations. But ſuch is the vanitie of mans vnderſtanding, they which dig and pearce not inwardly euen to the deniall of themſelues, doe builde vpon the ſande

28. *When Ieſus had ended theſe wordes.* I vnderſtand as well that ſermon which hee hadde when he deſcended out of the mountaine, as the reſt of his doctrine which hee had now vttered to the people. Therefore the meaning is, when as hee had in diuerſe places giuen a taſte of his doctrine to the people, they were all amaſed, becauſe that a certaine new & vnwonted maieltie did draw the minds of men vnto him. What it is to teach with authoritie and otherwiſe then the Scribes were accuſtomed, I haue before declared.

Mathew 8.

Marke 1.

Luke. 5.

1. Now when he was come downe from the mountaine, great multitudes followed him.

2. And lo there came a Leper, and worſhipped him, ſaying: maiſter: If thou wilt, thou canſt make me cleane.

3. And Ieſus putting forth his hand touched him, ſaying: I will, be thou cleane: and immediately his Leproſie was cleaneſed.

4. Then Ieſus ſayde vnto him: See thou tel no man, but goe and ſhew thy ſelfe to the prieſt, and offer the gift which Moſes commanded, for a witneſſe to them.

40. And there came a Leper to him, beſeeching him, & kneeled downe vnto him, & ſaid vnto him: If thou wilt, thou canſt make me cleane.

41. And Ieſus had compaſſion, and put forth his hand, & touched him, & ſaid to him, I wil: be thou cleane.

42. And aſſoone as he had ſpoken, immediately the Leproſie departed from him, and he was made cleane.

43. And after he had giuen him a ſtraight commaundement, hee ſent him away forthwith.

44. And ſaid vnto him, ſee thou ſay nothing to any man, but get thee hence, & ſhew thy ſelfe to the prieſt and offer for thy cleaſing thoſe thinges which Moſes commaunded, for a teſtimoniall vnto them.

45. And by and by hee aroſe, and tooke vpp his bed, and went forth before them all, in ſomuch that they were all amaſed, and glorified God, ſaying: wee neuer ſaw ſuch a thing,

12. Now it came to paſſe as he was in a certain city be- hold there was a man ſulof Leproſie, & when he ſaw Ieſus, he fel on his face, & beſought him ſaying, Lord: if thou wilt thou canſt make me cleane. 13. So he ſtretched forth his hand, & touched him, ſaying, I will. be thou cleane, & immediately the leproſie departed fro him

14. And hee commaunded him that he ſhuld tel it no man: but go, ſaith he, & ſhew thy ſelfe to the prieſt, & offer for thy clenſing, as Moſes hath commaunded for a wiſes vnto thee. 15. But ſo much more went ther a fame abroad of him: and great multitudes came together to hear & to be healed of him of their infirmities. 16. But he kept himſelf apart in the wildernes & praied.

1. When

1. *When hee was come downe from the mountaine.* Nowe Mathew returneth to the historie He sayd before that Christ ascended into the mountaine: Then he gathered as into one heape many poynts of the doctrine of Christ. and now he addeth, that when as he preached in the mounte, hee healed a certaine Leper. Marke and Luke doe report the same hystorie, though they doe not set downe the time. Also the Godhead of Christ was shewed in the same, in so much as with his onely word, and touching with his hand, hee presently cured the man of his leprotie. But though this leprosie had bin an other kinde of disease, then that which is called *elephantiasis*: yet it appeareth plainly that it was hard to be cured. And if it had continued any long time, it was a rare example to haue any man healed of the same. But if wee grant that Physicians could by the knowledge of their Arte haue holpe the same, yet it appeared in this miracle, that there was no help o. man in it.

2. *Hee came and worshipped.* What the Verbe doeth signifie, which they translate *to worship*, may easily be gathered out of this place. For the other two Euangelistes doe helpe vs well in the interpretation of it: of which Marke saith hee kneeled downe, and Luke sayth he fell vpon his face. Th. refore in his gesture, that is in his kneeling, the Leper shewed a signe of reuerence. And we know that the Iewes did commonly vse worshipping, as the people of the East are much bent to such ceremonies. Wherefore many thinke that this Leper thought not to worship Christ with anie diuine worship, but onely to salute him honorably as some excellēt prophet of the Lord. But I do not dispute with what affection he worshipped Christ: but what he attributed to him I see, that is, that hee could make him cleane if hee would. By which words he witnesseth that he acknowledged a diuine power in Christ. And when Christ answereth that he will, he sheweth that he hath more attributed to him by man, then is proper to man. For it is necessary that hee should bee of great power, that should restore men to health: for whether the Leper beleued Christ to bee the Sonne of God, or that he had this power giuen him as Moses and the Prophets: Yet he doubteth not but that he hath in his hand and power the gift of healing. And that he speaketh vnder condition: If thou wilt thou canst, is not contrary to that assurance of faith, which God requireth in our prayers: neither ought men to hope after more then God promiseth. And the Leper was not assured either by Oracle or by any promise of God, what Christ would doe to him, therefore he should haue done rashly if hee had passed beyond these boundes: for where as we reade that some did sometimes pray simply, it is to be vnderstood that they had some singular motions, which cannot be holden as a rule. Yet I know not whether one speaking properly, may say that the Leper conceived this as a prayer: For hee onely sayth that he is so euerswaded of the power of Christ, so that he doubteth not but that he could heale his Leprosie. Then he offereth himselfe to be healed by him, being yet vncertaine of the successe: because the will of Christ was not as yet knowne vnto him.

3. *Putting forth his hande he touched him.* The touching of a Leper in the time of the Lawe was contagious: but because there was that puritie in Christe, which swalloweth vpe all vncleannesse and pollutions, he doth neyther defile himselfe by touching the Leper, neyther doth he transgresse the

the lawe. Hee taking vppon him our fleshe, doeth not onely vouchsafes the touching of his hande, but tooke vppon him one, and the same body with vs, that wee might bee flesh of his fleshe: Neyther doth he onely reach his arme to vs, but descended from heauen euen to the very helles: yet not withstanding, hee was not any thing blotted thereby, but remaying perfect, hee tooke away all our filthinesse, and hath washed vs with his holinesse. But when with his word alone, he was able to heale a Leper, he also touched him with his hand, to witnesse his mercifull affection, and no marueile, seeing that he would take vppon him our fleshe, that hee might purge vs from all our sins, wherefore reaching out of his hand, was a signe & a token of his great fauour & goodnes. And certainly, that which wee doe carelessly passe by through our cold reading, cannot bee well considered without great wonder, that the Sonne of God was so far from abhorring to speake with the Leaper, that hee reached out his hand also to touch his vncleanesse.

4. *Iesus saye vnto him,* Some, that they might excuse the Leaper, doe not thinke that hee was earnestly forbidden by Christe, that hee shoulde not publishe the myracle, but that it was rather vsed to pricke him forwarde: yet others are of a better iudgement which thinke that the cause of his forbidding was, for that the time appoynted was not yet come. I grant that this myracle ought not to haue beene suppressed: but there was some certaine reason why the Lord would not haue his fame spread so soone, or at the least not vttered by the Leaper, therefore I iudge that the Leaper by his preposterous zeale was so farre from deseruing any praye, that he was rather to bee condemned because hee did not obey the commaundement. If hee woulde haue beene thankful to him that healed him, hee coulde not otherwise haue done it better then by obedience, which with God is preferred before all sacrifices, 1. Sam. 15. 22. and it is the beginning and chiefe of all lawfull worshippe.

Therefore by this example wee are taught, that they doe wickedly, which maintaine an vnadvised zeale: for the more they apply theselues in the seruice of God, the more they increase the nuber of rebelles against his commaundement.

Shewe thy selfe to the Priest. Because the Ceremonies of the lawe were not as yet abrogated, Christ woulde not that they shoulde bee contemned or pretermitted. Nowe God in his lawe hadde commaunded (as it is reported in the fourteenth Chapter of Leuiticus, and the seconde verse,) that if any man was censed from his Leprosie, that hee shoulde offer himselfe to the Priest, with a sacrifice of thankesgiuinge. And the ende was, that the Priest by his iudgement shoulde approoue the benefite of GOD, and also that hee that was healed, shoulde shewe some testimonie of his thankfulness. Christe therefore sending the Leaper to the Priest, doeth declare that hee hadde no other purpose, but that he might sette forth the gloiy of God. For the shewing is referred to a triall, and the gift was a token of thankes giuing. His wil was that the Priestes shoulde iudge, that the grace of God might bee the more euident and vndoubted: and that the Leaper shoulde acknowledge that hee was healed of God. Yet (as I sayde euen now) hee commaundeth to keepe the rites prescribed in the lawe vnto the time of the abrogation,

The Papistes are without all reason, in that out of this place they gather a lawe of their confession . Allegorically they call sinne a leprosie , and the sacrificers which the Pope consecrateth, to bee the iudges of the spirituall leprosie. But if wee shoulde graunt that this power was giuen to the Priestles in the lawe, that the people might knowe that all their cleanness and iudgement of the same did depende vpon the Priestthoode : Yet the Popish sacrificers did wickedly, to take that vnto themselues . For what honour soeuer was giuen to the Priestles of the lawe, the same doeth Christe nowe challenge to himselfe alone. Therefore hee onely knoweth and iudgeth of the spirituall leprosie, and hee is onely worthy to whom they that are cleansed, should offer the gift of their purgation. And therefore vnder the lawe was their cleansing sealed by the offering of a sacrifice, because that men are not otherwise cleansed then by the shedding of blood. Therefore to giue that right to any other, which God hath assigned to his owne sonne, is most haynous sacriledge. And that Christe commanded the ministers of the Gospell to declare vnto sinners that they are made cleane, which the Papistes do imagine to appertaine to their fained iurisdiction , is not to bee wrested that they might discerne of the leprosie.

MARK E. 44. *For a witnessse vnto them.* Some doe take a testimony for a law or statute, as it is said in the hundreth two & twenty Psalme, & the fourth verse. God gaue this as a testimony to Israell. Yet this seemeth to mee to bee colde : for I doubt not but that the pronowne *Them*, hath relation to the priests. Therefore in my iudgement Christ had respect to the circumstance of this present matter . because that in this myracle there shoulde bee most euident prooffe to conuince them for their vnthankfulness. Neither is that any let that Christ commanded the Leper to holde his peace. for his wil was not that the remembrance of this myracle should be buried for euer. Therefore, when as by the commandement of Christ the Leper came into the priestles sight : it was to witnessse vnto them that were inexcusable, if they woulde not embrace Christ for a minister of God, and also all occasion of speaking euill was taken away, when as Christ did not omitte any poynt of the law.

In summe, if they had not bene incurable, they might haue bene brought to Christe, but this so solemne a witnessse of God was effectually enough for the condemning of the vnbeleeuers.

45. *So that Iesus coule no more.* Heereby wee gather why Christe woulde not that this myracle shoulde so soone haue bene vttered, that hee might by that meanes haue the more liberty to teach, not that the enemies rose vpe against him which sought to stoppe his mouth : But because the importunity of the people was so great in desiring myacles, that hee hadde no time for doctrine : and his will was to haue all menne more bent to the worde then to signes.

Therefore Luke sayeth that hee dwelled in the desertes . For hee auoyded the sorte of menne, because hee saw hee coule not satisfie the desires of the people, except hee shoulde ouerwhelme his doctrine with abundance of signes.

Mathew. 8

Marke

Luke. 7.

7. When Iesus was entred into Capernaum, hee came vnto him a Centurion beseeching him.

6. And said, maister, my seru-
ant lieth sicke at home of the
palse, and is grievously pained.

7. And Iesus sayd vnto him, I
will come and heale him,

8. But the Centurion answered
saying: Maister, I am not worthy
that thou shouldst come vnder
my rooffe: but speak the word on-
ly, and my seruant shall be healed

9. For I am a man also vnder the
authoritie of another, and haue
souldiers vnder me: and I say to
one, Go: & he goeth, and to ano-
ther, come, and he cometh, & to
my seruant, do this, & he doth it
10. When Iesus heard that, hee
maruailed and said to them that
followed him: Verely I say vnto
you, I haue not founde so great
faith euen in Israell.

11. But I say vnto you that ma-
ny shall come from the East and
West, and shall sit downe with
Abraham and Isaac, and Iacob
in the kingdome of heauen.

12. And the children of the king-
dome shall be cast out into utter
darkenes: there shall be weeping
and gnashing of teeth.

13. Then Iesus said vnto the Cen-
turion: Goe thy way, & as thou
hast beleened, so be it vnto thee.
And his seruant was healed the
same houre.

5. When Iesus was entred. They which think that Mat. & Luke do set down two diuers hyffories, do strue about a matter of nothing. This only diuersitie is in the words. That Mathew sayth that a Centurion came to Christ, But Luke saith that he sent certain of the Iewes which should speake vnto him in his name. But Mathew doth not without cause attribute that vnto him, which was done at his request and in his name. But the two Euangelists do so agree in all circumstances that it were folly to imagine two miracles of one. Also I doubt not but the

1. When he had ended all his saying, in the audience of the people, hee entred into Capernaum.

2. And a certaine Centurions seru-
ant was sicke, and ready to die, which was
deare vnto him.

3. And when he heard of Iesus, hee
sent vnto him the Elders of the Iewes,
beseeching him that hee would come
and heale his seruant.

4. So they came to Iesus, and besought
him instantly saying, that he was wor-
thy that he should doe that for him.

5. For he loueth, sayd they, our nation,
and hath built vs a Synagogue.

6. Then Iesus went with them: but
when he was now not far frō the house,
the Centurion sent freinds to him, say-
ing to him, Lord, trouble not thy selfe:
for I am not worthy that thou shouldst
enter vnder my rouse.

7. Wherefore I thought not my selfe
woorthy to come vnto thee: but say the
word, and my seruant shall be whole.

8. For I likewise am a man set vnder
authoritie, and haue vnder me souldi-
ours, and I say vnto one: Go, and he go-
eth, & to another, Come, and he cometh
and to my seruant, Doe this, and hee
doth it.

9. When Iesus heard these thinges, hee
maruailed at him, and turned him, and
sayd to the people that followed him, I
say vnto you, I haue not found so great
faith: no not in Israell.

10. And when they that were sent,
turned back to the house, they found the
seruant that was sicke, whole.

companie of souldiours, which the Centurion guided, had their standing in the Citie of Capernaum, as they were wont to distribute legions for the defence of the cities. When he perceiued the maners of the people to be very wicked and corrupt: (for we know that Capernaum being a citie neare to the sea side, was filled with moe superstitions then others,) yet that hindered not but that the countrie superstitious being condemned, he might haue a taste of true & sincere godlines: for he could not build a synagogue for the Iewes without some enuie and danger, neyther could he loue that nation, but because that he embraced the worship of God alone. Therefore before that Christ healed his seruant, he himselfe was healed of the Lorde. And that was wonderfull, that a warriour which had passed the seas with a band of souldiours, that hee might accustom the Iewes to beare the yoke of the Romanes tyrannie, should willingly submit himselfe and yeelde obedience to the God of Israell. That Luke sayth that this seruant was deare vnto him: he by this meanes preuenteth a doubt which might come into the readers minds. For wee know that the maisters had not the seruants in such estimation, except they were such as through singular industrie, faith, or some other vertue, had obtayned their fauour. Luke therefore declareth that he was no common or vile bondman, but a faithfull seruant endued with rare giftes, which was in great fauour with his master: for this cause hee had so great a care of his life, and did so diligently commend him. But it appeareth by both the Euangelists, that it was a sodain palseie which at the first did put him in despaire of his life, for the slow palseies are without torments. And Mathew sayth that the young man was greiuously vexed. And Luke sayth he was neare vnto death. so both sayings preuayle to set forth the glory of the miracle, either the sorrow and paine, or the great daunger, so that I dare say the lesse, for the certaintie of the maner of the disease.

L V K E. 5. *For hee loveth our nation.* It is not to bee doubted but that the Iewes commed him for his godlines. For he could not for any other cause loue so detested a nation, then for loue of the lawe and worshipec of God. And by building of a Synagogue, he did evidently declare that he fauoured the doctrine of the lawe. Wherefore they say, and not without a cause, that he was worthie to haue Christ shew himselfe bountifull to him, as to a godly worshippinger of God. Yet it is to be wondered at, that by their entreatie they shoulde obtayne the fauour of God for a Gentile, which they themselves contemptuously refused. For if Christ be a minister and a dispenser of the giftes of God for them, why doe not they enioy that grace themselves, beefore they get it for strangers. But such securitie doth alwayes raigne amongst hypocrites, that they thinke to make God after a sorte obedient vnto them, as if it were in their power to make the grace of God subiect to their power and will. Then being filled therewith, or rather because they doe not vouchsafe to taste thereof at all, they resigne it vnto others as a thing superfluous.

M A T H E W. 8. *I am not worthy that hee shoulde come vnder my rouse.* Because Mathewe is shorter, hee bringeth the man speaking thus himselfe. But Luke expresseing it more fully, sayeth that hee gaue this in commaundement to his friendes, but the meaning of both is all one. But there are two
prin-

capall poyntes of this sentence . The Centurion sparing Christe, for honour sake, requireth that Christe shoulde not weary himselfe, because he accounteth himselfe vnworthy of his comming . Then he attributeth so great power to him, that hee beleueth that by his onely will and worde, hee canne restore his seruauant to life. A wonderfull humilitie : that hee shoulde extoll a man of a seruile and a captiue nation so much aboute himselfe. And it may bee that being accustommed to the pride of the Iewes, through his owne modeltie he did not take in ill parte to bee accounted a prophane manne, and so was a stayde to iniurie the Prophete of God, if hee should be compellied to conueto a man that was a Gentile and vncleane. Whatsoever the matter is, it is certaine that hee speaketh from his heart, and that hee esteemeth so reuerently of Christe, that hee dareth not call him to him. Nay, as it followeth in the texte in Luke, he accounteth himselfe as vnworthy his ipache. Yet it may bee demanded by what reason hee was perswaded to highly to extoll Christe : and that which presently followeth, encreaseth the doubt the more. *Onely speake the worde and the childe shall bee healed.* For if he had not knowne Christe to be the sonne of God, it had bene superstition to haue giuen the glory of God to a man.

But it is scarce credible that hee coulde bee rightly instructed in the Godhead of Christe, which as yet was vknowne almost to all. Also Christe imputeth not, nor chageth his woordes with ignorance, but declareth that they proceede of fayth. And this reason enforced many interpreters to thinke that the Centurion celebrateth Christe as the true and onely God. But I thinke, that when the godly manne was fully assured of the diuine woorkes of Christ, hee simply apprehended the power of God in him. And without doubt hee hadde also hearde somewhat of the promised Redeemer. Therefore though hee vnderstoode not Christe to bee God manifested in the flesh : yet hee was so perswaded, that the power of GOD was shewed in him, and that such a gift was giuen him, that in his myracles hee shewed the presence of God. So hee doeth not superstitiously ascribe that vr. to man, which was proper to God : but considering what was committed of God to Christ, he beleueueth that by his word alone, he could heale his seruauant.

If any obiect, that there is nothing more proper to God, then to do by his woorde what hee pleaseth, and that this mighty power cannot without sacrifice bee giuen to a mortall manne : that againe is easily answered. Although the Centurion did not so subtilly distinguish, yet hee did not attribute this power to the woorde of a mortall manne, but of God, whose minister he was certainly perswaded Christe was. This hee doubted not off. Therefore when as Christe hadde the power of healing, hee acknowledging it to be a heauenly power, doth not tie it to his bodily presence, but is satisfied with his woorde, from whence he beleueth that such power proceedeth.

The similitude whiche the Centurion vseth, is not taken of the like, as they say : but compareth the lesse with the greater. For hee accounteth more of the Diuine power, which hee declareth to be in Christe, then of the power which hee himselfe hadde ouer his seruantes and souldiours.

10. *Iesus marvelled.* Although it cannot befall to God to maruaile, because that it ariseth of things that are newe and vnlooked for: yet may it befall to Christe, as hee hadde with our flesh taken vpon him mannes affections. Now that which Christ sayeth, *that he found not so great fayth euen in Israll,* was spoken in a certaine respect, and not simply: for if we consider all the poyntes of fayth, the fayth of Mary did herein at the least excell, that she beleened that shee was with childe by the holy Ghost, and that she should beare the onely bogotten sonne of God. Then, that she acknowledged her sonne borne of her wombe, to be her creatour, and the maker and only redeemer of all the world. But Christ commended the fayth of this heathen menne before the fayth of all the Iewes for two especiall causes: Namely, that of so litle and small a taste of doctrine, he brought forth so great fruite, and that so sodainly: for this was not common, so highly to extoll the power of God, which only beganne to shine as certaine sparkes, in Christe. Then, whereas the Iewes were bent to outward signes more then was meete, this heathen man requireth no visible signe: but sayth that the onely word should satisfie him. Christe was a comming to him, not that he needed, but that he might proue this fayth of his. Wherefore for this cause especially he commendeth this fayth, because he rested vpon his word onely. What would euen one of the Apollles haue done? Come Lord, see and touche. This manne desireth neither his corporall comming nor his touching: but beleueth that there is so great power included in the word, that thereby he doth certainly looke for the health of his seruant. And hee giueth this honour not to the word of a man, but to the worde of God, which sheweth that Christ is not a priuate manne, but a Prophet sent from God. And hereby may a generall rule be gathered, although God woulde that our saluation should be wrought in the flesh of Christe, and doeth daily seale the same by his Sacramentes, yet the certaintie of the same is to be fetched out of the word. For except this authoritie be giuen to the worde, that we beleue that so soone as God speaketh by his ministers, our sinnes are forgiven vs, and wee restored to life, all the hope of our saluation falleth away.

11. *Many shall come from the East.* As in the person of the seruant, Christ gaue a taste, and as it were the first frutes of his grace to the Gentiles: so hee teacheth that his mailter was a token of the calling of the Gentiles which was to come, and of spreading the fayth throughout all the world. For he teacheth that they should come, not only out of the next borders, but from the furthest coastes of the worlde. And though this was witnessed by many prophetes of the Prophetes, yet at the first this seemed to be absurd and incredible to the Iewes, which imagined that God was bound to the stocke of Abraham. Wherefore this cannot be heard without admiration, that those which were then strangers, should be of the houthoulde and heires of the kingdome of God. And not onely so, but the couenaunt of saluation should presently be published, that all the world might be gathered into one body of the Church, while the Gentiles which should come to the fayth, should, as hee sayeth, be made partakers of the saluation with Abraham, Isaac and Iacob. Hereby wee doe assuredly gather that the same saluation which is giuen vnto vs through Christe, was in times past promised also to the Fathers: for

For otherwise inheritance could not be common, except the sayth were one, which is the meanes to obtaine the same.

In the worde *sitting downe* there is an allusion to tables. Yet because we know that the heavenly life needeth not meate and drinke, the speech signifieth as much as if it had beene sayd, they shall enjoy the same life.

12. *But the children of the kingdome.* Why calleth hee them the children of the kingdome, which were nothing lesse then the children of Abraham? For certainly it is not meete that they should bee accounted in the flocke of God, which are straungers from the sayth: I answer, although they were not rightly of the Church of God: yet because they did occupie a place in the Church, he graunteth them this title. Then it is to be noted, that the couenaunt of God was of such force, that so long as it continued in the flocke of Abraham, the inheritance of the heavenly kingdome shoulde properly belong to them. At the last, in respecte of God himselfe, they were then as yet holy branches of a holy roote: and the forsaking which followed, sheweth sufficiently that they were then retained in the household of God. Secondly, it is to be noted, that Christ speaketh not of particuler menne, but of the whole nation. And this was much harder then the calling of the Gentiles. For it was somewhat tollerable that the Gentiles shoulde bee grafted by free adoption into the body of Abraham with his posterity: but that the Jewes themselves shoulde be thrust out, that the Gentiles might succede into their empty room, that was accounted wonderfull. Yet Christ sayth, that both these things should come to passe, that God woulde admitte straungers into the bosome of Abraham, and that he woulde driue out the children. In *outward darkenesse*, there is a secret Antithesis. For God declareth that out of his kingdome, which is the kingdome of light, there raigneth nothing but darkenes. And the scripture doth metaphorically by darknesse signifie a horrible griefe, which cannot be exprest by words, nor in this life can be comprehended in any sense.

13. *Goe, and as thou beleuest.* Hereby it appeareth howe lovingly Christ poureth forth his grace, where hee obtayneth a vessell of sayth opened. For although he speaketh of the Centurion in these woordes: yet it is not to be doubted, but that by him hee calleth vs all to hope well. But wee are heereby also taught, why God for the most parte dealeth more streightly towards vs: for our vnbelefe restrayneth his liberality. Therefore if by sayth wee open a passage for him, he will heare our requestes and prayers.

Matth.

Marke.

Luke. 7

11. And it came to passe the day after that he went into a citty called Naim, and many of his disciples went with him, and a great multitude.

12. Nowe, when he came neere to the gate of the citty: behold, there was a dead man carryed out, who was the onely sonne of his mother, which was a widow, and much people of the citty was with her.

13. And when the Lorde saw her, hee hadde

come

compassion on her, and sayde vnto her, weepe not.

14. And hee went and touched the coffin, and they that bare him stood still, and he sayd, young man I say vnto thee, arise.

15. And hee that was dead, sate vppe, and began to speake, and hee deliuered him to his mother.

16. Then there came a feare on them all, and they glorified GOD, sayinge, a greate Prophet is raised vpps amonge vs, and GOD hath visited his people.

17. And this rumor of him went forth throughout all Iudea, and throughout all the region round about.

II. *And it came to passe.* When as in all the myracles of Christ, that analogie is to be holden, which Matthew teacheth, let vs know that this young manne, which Christ rayfed from death, is a token of the spirituall life, which Christ restoreth to vs. The name of the citty maketh for the certainty of the history. To the same purpose also appertaineth that which Luke sayth: that a great company followed them both: for both Christ had many companions with him, & many for dutie sake, were present with the woman, to perfourme the buriall. Therefore the resurrection of the young man was scene of so many witnesses, that the myracle might not be doubted of. Hyther also apperteineth the famous title of the place: for wee know that the assemblies were in the gats. And that the dead was carried out of the citty, was according to the old maner of all nations. Also Hierome writeth that the citty of Naim stood in his time, and it was situated two myles beneath the mount Tabor towards the South.

1. *The onely begotten sonne of his mother.* This reason perswaded Christ to rayse the young manne: for hee seeing a widdowe deptyued of her onely sonne, tooke pity vppon her. Neyther did hee deterre his fauour, vnill some shoulde require it, as hee did in other places: but hee preuenteth the prayes of all, and restoreth the young manne to his mother, which looked for no such thing. Wherein wee haue a notable spectacle of his free mercy, while that hee quicken vs, and rayse vs vppe from death. It may be, that by touching the coffin, his minde was to shew how little he feared death, and the graue, that hee might giue vs life. And certainly hee doeth not onely vouchsafe to touch vs with his hande, that hee might giue life to the dead: but that hee might carry vs in to heauen, he himselfe descended into the graue.

Young man, I say to thee. By this phrase Christe declareth how truly Paule reacheth, Rom. 4. 17. God calleth those things which are not, as if they were. He calleth the dead man, & maketh him to heare him, that death it selfe might sodely be changed into life. And herein wee haue first a notable token of the resurrection to come, euen as he comandeth, Ezechiel 37. 4. to comand the dry bones to heare the word of God. The we are also taught, how Christ doth quicken vs, spirituallly, through sayth: namely, while hee addeth his secret power to his woordes, so that it pierceth euen to the dead soules; euen as he sayth, Iohn 5. 25.

The

The houre commeth, when the dead shal heare the voyce of the sonne of God: and they which heare it, shall liue.

16. *There came a feare on them all.* It is necessary that the feeling of the presence of God should bring a feare with it. But this difference there is between the feare of vnbeleeuers and the godly: the vnbeleeuers are eyther attonied through feare, or being afraid, they come against God. But the godly and the religious being touched with a reuerence, doe willingly humble themselues. Therefore this feare is taken in good part: because that they yeelding honour to the power of God, which they behold, they doe not onely reuerence God: but also giue thanks to him. That they doe say, that God visiteth his people, I vnderstand it not of euery visitation, but such as should wholly restore the. The Iewes were not onely fallen, but they lay in a miserable and a vile slauerie, as if God had not looked vpon them. This onely hope remayned that GOD had promised himselfe to bee their redeemer, after they were afflicted with extreame miseries. Therefore I thinke that by this miracle they were warned to hope for their restitution at hand. They are onely deceiued in the maner of the visitation. For though they acknowledge and commend the wonderfull grace of God in him, that a great Prophet was risen: yet this title is farre inferior to the dignitie and glory of the promised Messias. Whereby it appeareth that the fayth of that people was then very confused, and ouerwhelmed with manie cloudes of fanfics.

Mathew. 8.

19. *Then came there a certain Scribe, and sayd vnto him Maister, I will follow thee, whither soeuer thou goest.*

20 *But Iesus said vnto him the Foxes haue holes, and the birdes of the ayre haue nestes: but the sonne of man hath not whereon to rest his head.*

21. *And another of his disciples sayd vnto him, Maister, suffer me to goe first to bury my father.*

22. *But Iesus sayde vnto him, follow me, and let the dead bury their dead.*

Marke.

Luke. 9.

37. *And it came to passe, that as they went in the way, a certaine man sayd vnto him, I will follow thee Lord, whither soeuer thou goest.*

38. *And Iesus saide vnto him, the foxes haue holes, and the birdes of the heauen haue nestes: but the sonne of man hath not whereon to lay his head.*

39. *But he sayd to another, follow me, and the same sayd, Lord, suffer mee first to goe bury my father.*

60 *And Iesus sayd vnto him, let the dead bury their dead: but goe thou and preach the kingdome of God,*

61. *Then another sayd, I will follow thee Lord: but let me first goe bid them farewell, which are at my house.*

62. *And Iesus sayd vnto him, no man that putteth his hand to the plough, and looketh back, is apt to the kingdome of God.*

19. *Then came there a certaine.* Matthew propoeth to vs two men, but L V K E three: which, when they were all readie to giue their name

to Christ, yet as they were by their severall vices hindered from a right course, so accordingly they receiued diuerse answeres. Yet at the first it might seeme absurde, that Christ should turne away, and not receiue him into his company, which offered presently and without delay to follow him: and rayneth the other with him, which was more slowe and not so readie, but asked a time of respite. But he had good reason for both. Whereof proceedeth such readines of the Scribe, that he should so readily prepare himselfe to waite vpon Christ: but because he did not account how hard and straight the condition was of his followers? It is to be noted that the Scribe, which was accustomed to a quiet & a profitable life, and had bene in honour, could not haue borne the reproches, poertie, persecutions, and the crosse. This man would follow Christ: but he dreameth of a soft and pleasant way, and of lodgings filled with all good things when as Christs Disciples should walke through thornes, and should through continuall sorrowes, goe forward to the crosse. Therefore the more hast he maketh, the vnreadier he is: for hee doth euen as hee would goe to warre vnder the shadow and in dalliance, without sweating, out of the dust, and without the reach of the dartes. It is no maruaile to haue such refused by Christ: because that as they do rashly thrust in themselues, so being discouraged at the first brunt, and being tired at the first skirmish, they take them to their feete, and doe siltily forsake their place. Consider also that this Scribe mighte seeke to bee with CHRIST, that hee might bee fedde at his table freely, daintily, and in yulenesse. Wherefore let vs vnderstande that wee are all admonished, that we should not rashly and carelessly intrude our selues to be the disciples of Christ, accounting nothing of the crosse & troubles: but let vs rather consider before hand what a condition remaineth for vs. For with this instruction he entertaineth vs into his schoole, that we denying our selues should take vp our crosse.

20. *The Foxes haue holes.* The Sonne of God declareth what the condition of his life should be, whilest he was conuersant vpon the earth: and he prescribeth to all his disciples what maner of life they ought to frame themselves: yet it is maruaile, that Christ sayth, that he hath not a foote of ground, where he might lay his head, when as there were many kinde and godly men, which would haue receiued him into their house. But it is to be noted, that hee sayde this for admonition sake, least that the Scribe should looke for a large & a fatte reward, as from a rich maister, when the Lord himselfe liued by intreatie in other mens houses.

21. *That I may bury my father.* Wee haue sayde that the Scribe was refused to be a companion of Christ: because that he rashly thrust in himselfe, imagining that he should haue a profitable kind of life. But this which Christ retya- neth had a contrary fault: for this imperfection, that it was hard for him to forsake his father, hindered him, that he would not presently haue followed the calling of Christ. But it is to be supposed that he was an old man: because he sayth suffer me, that I may bury him. For this speech declareth that he had not much time left him. Luke declareth that he was commanded of Christ, that he should follow: For the which Mathew sayth, that it was one of his disciples. Also hee refuseth not the calling, but craueth that hee may haue libertie for a time to

goe to doe his dutie to his father. For his excuse signifieth as much, as if hee shoulde saye, that hee were not free, vntill his father were dead. But by the answer of Christe wee vnderstand that children must so doe their duty to their parentes, that so oft as God calleth other where, they not regarding the other, shoulde giue the chiefe place to his commandementes. For all duties to men ought to giue place, so oft as God commandeth that our diligence be employed vpon him.

Nowe euery manne must see what GOD requireth of them, and what the calling asketh of them, to which they are tyed: least the earthly parents should hinder them from yeelding the right, which is due to the chiefe & onely father of all men.

22. *Let the dead bury their dead.* Christ doth not in these words condemne the dutie of buriall. For it were filthy and beastly to cast out the bodies of the dead, without buriall. And wee knowe that the right of buriall was deliuered of God to men, and was vsed amongst the Saintes, for to confirme the hope of the last resurrection. His will was onely to teach, that whatsoeuer calleth vs backe, or hindereth vs from a right course, doeth sauour of nothing but death. As if hee shoulde haue sayde: that they alone doe liue, which apply their endeuours and all the partes of their life to obey GGD: and they which sitte in the worlde, and doe passe by their dutie to God, that they might yeeld themselves obedient to menne, are like to dead men, which in vaine and vnprofitably imploy themselves in caring for the dead.

L V. 60. *Goe and preach.* Matthe we sayeth onely, 'follow mee: But Luke doeth more plainly declare to what end he was called: namely, that he should bee a minister and preacher of the Gospell. For if hee shoulde haue bene left in a priuate life, there had bene no necessitie of leauing his father: so that for fauour of his father, hee faile not from the Gospell. But because the preaching of the Gospell suffered him not to sitte at home, Christ for good cause draweth him from his father. But as the wonderfull goodnesse of Christ appeareth in him, that hee would bestow so honourable an office vpon a man, as yet so weake: so it is worth the labour to note, that he with flattery doth not nourish, but correcteth the fault, which as yet stooke fast on him.

L V. 61. *And another sayth.* Matthe we maketh no mention of this third man. And it appeareth that he was more tyed to the world, then at liberty, and ready to follow Christ. He offereth himselfe to follow Christ, but with an exception, when he had bid them of his household farewell: that is, when he hath set his busines in order at home, as they vse, which prepare themselves to go forth or depart. This is the cause why Christ doth so sharply reprove him. For in word he professeth himselfe to be a follower of Christ yet he turneth his backe towards him, vntill he had done his earthly businesse. Now when Christ saith, that they are not fitte for the Kingdome of God, which looke backe, wee must diligently seeke what he meaneth hereby. They are sayde to looke back, which being intangled with the cares of this worlde, doe suffer themselves to bee lead out of the right way: and especially they, which drowne themselves in those cares, which make them vnprofitable to follow Christ.

Math. 9.

Matth. 9.

1. Then he entred into a ship, and passed ouer, and came into his owne citie.

2. And lo they brought to him a man sick of the palse, lying on a bed, and Iesus seeing their faith, said to the sick of the palse, son, be of good comfort, thy sins are forgiven thee.

3. And behold, certain of the Scribes said with themselves, this manne blasphemeth.

4. But when Iesus saw their thoughts, he said wherfore thinke ye euill things in your heartes?

5. For whether is it easier to say, thy sinnes are forgiven thee, or to say, arise and walke.

6. And that yee maye knowe that the sonne of man hath authoritie in earth, to forgine sinns, (then said he to the sick of the palse) arise, take vp thy bedde, and goe to thy house.

7. And he arose, and departed to his owne house,

8. So when the multitude sawe it, they marvelled, and glorified God, which had giuen such authoritie to men.

Marke. 2.

1. After a fewe dayes he entred into Capernaum againe, & it was noyced that he was in the house.

2. And anon, many gathered together, in so much that the place about the dore could not receiue any more: & hee preached the word to them. 3. And ther came vnto hi, that brought one sick of the palse, borne of 4. men. 4. And because they could not come neere vnto him for the multitude, they vncovered the roofof the house where he was, & whē they had braken it open, they let downe the bed, wherein the sick of the palse lay. 5. Now

when Iesus sawe their faith, hee said to the sick of the palse, son, thy sins are forginē thee. 6. And there were certaine of the Scribes, sitting there, and reasoning in their heartes. 7. Why doth this man speake such blasphemies? who can forgine sinnes but God onely? 8. And immediatly, whē Iesus perceined in his spirit, that thus they thought with theselues

he sayd vnto the, why reason ye these thinges in your heartes? 9. Whether is it easier to say to the sick of the palse, thy sins are forginē thee or to say, arise, take vp thy bed, & walke. 10. And that yee may knowe the sonne of man

hath authoritie in earth to forgine sinns, he said to the sick of the palse, arise, take vp thy bed, & get thee hēce to thine own house. 12. And by

ea by he arose, & tooke vp his bed, & went forth before the al, in so much that they were all amazed, and glorified, God saying: we neuer saw such a thing.

Luke 5.

17. And it came to passe, on a certaine day, as he was teaching that the priests & doctors of the law far by, which were come out of euery towne of Galilee, & Iudea, & Ierusalem & the power of the lord was in hi, to heale them.

18. Then behold, men brought a man lying in a bed, which was taken with a palse: and they sought meanes to bring him, & to lay him before him.

19. And when they could not find what way they might bring him in, because of the prease, they went vpon the house, & let him downe through the tilinge bed & all, in the midst before Iesus. 20. And when hee sawe their sayth, hee sayd vnto him, many thy sins are forgiven thee.

21. Then the Scribes, and pharisees began to thinke, saying, who is this & speaketh blasphemies? who can forgine sinns, but God onely? 22. But when Iesus perceined their thoughts, he answered and sayde vnto them, what thinke ye in your heartes?

23. Whether is it easier to say, thy sinnes are for given thee, or to say, arise, and walke.

24. But that ye may knowe that the sonne of man hath authoritie in earth to forgine sinnes (he said to the sick of the palse) I say to thee, arise, take vppe thy bed, & go to thine own house.

25. And immediatly he rose vp before them, & tooke vp his bed whereon he lay, & departed to his owne house: praying God.

26. And they were all amazed, & praised God, & were filled with feare saying: doubtles we haue seen strang thinges to day

MAT. 1. *And came into his owne citie.* This place declareth that the citie of Capernaum was commonly thought to haue been the place, where Christ was borne because that hee did much frequent the same. It is not to bee doubted, but that the three doe set downe the same historie, although one doe more exactly set downe the circumstances then the other. Luke saith, that the Scribes came out of diuerse partes of Iudea, in whose sight Christ healed the man sicke of a palse. Yet he declareth that others were also healed by the grace of Christ. For before he came to speake of the man sicke of the palse, speaking in the plural number, saith, that the power of God was shewed in healing their diseases. The glory of this miracle was wonderfull, that a man taken in all the partes of his body, whom they had let down in a bed by cordes, suddenly arose both sound & nimble. Yet there is an other especiall cause, why the Euangelistes doe stand more vpon this miracle, then vpon others: that is, because the Scribes doe take in scorn, that Christ should take vpon him the power and authoritie of forgiving of sins: but it was the will of Christ to confirme and seale the same with a visible signe.

2. *And when he had sene their faith.* God onely knoweth our faith, but in that their painefull trouble they shewed a token of their faith: for they would neuer haue taken vpon them so troublesome a busines, neyther would they haue wrestled with such lets and hinderances, if their mindes hadde not bene assured with hope of certaine successe: so the fruit of their faith appeared in this that they were not wearie, though they could enter in no way. For that opinion seemeth hard to me, that some thinke Christ, as hee was God, knewe their faith, which lay hid within. Now because that Christ granted to their faith that benefite, which hee was about to bestow vpon the man sicke of the palse, it is accustomed to be demaunded in this place, how much men may bee holpen by the faith of other men. And first it is certaine, that the faith of Abraham profited his posteritie, while that he embraced the free couenant of saluation offered to him & to his seed. The same may also be taught of all the faithfull, that through their faith, they cause the grace of God to spread to their children, and that before they are borne. And that hath place in young infantes, which by reason of their age, are not capable of faith. But they which are of age and haue not faith of their owne (whether they be strangers or borne of Gods children) in respect of the eternall saluation of the soule, cannot be help by the faith of others, but by meanes. For whereas our prayers are not without fruit, wherein we aske of God, that he would conuert the vnbeleeuers to repentance it appeareth that our faith doth profit them: yet so that they cannot bee saued, vntill that they haue faith themselves. And it is well known, that whereas there is a mutuall consent of faith, there the saluation of some is againe help of others. This also is without controuersie, that the vnbeleeuers haue earthly benefites bestowed vpon them for the godlies sake. Concerning this present place though it is sayd, that Christ was moued by the faith of others: yet the sicke man could not haue his sinnes forgiven, except he had faith of his owne. Christ doth often giue the health of body to the vnworthy, as God doth dayly make his sunne to rise vpon the good and euill: but hee reconcileth vs vnto himselfe by no other meanes but by faith: wherefore that figure Sinedoche is in that word *therefore* because that Christ did not so behold the faith of them that bore the sick man, but that he beheld also his owne faith.

Thy sinnes are forgiven thee. Christ in these words seemeth to promise to the manne sicke of the pallie more then hee sought for: but when hee would cure his bodie, he beginneth to take away the cause of his disease, and also hee teacheth the man sicke of the pallie, how hee came by that sicknes, and howe hee ought to make his prayers. For because that commonly men do not think thole paines, which they endure, to be Gods whips, they doe onely wish for release and ease in the flesh, and are carelesse for their sinnes. Like as if a sicke manne neglecting his disease, should onely seeke remedie for his present greife. But the onely deliuerance from all troubles is, to haue G O D mercifull vnto vs. Sometime it falleth out, that the wicked escape out of their troubles, and yet haue God no lesse their enemy then before. but while they thinke themselves discharged, they presently fall either into the same dangers againe, or into noe, and thole more greiuous, which do testifie that there is no measure or end, vntill the wrath of God be appealed. as he witnesseth by the Prophet Amos 5. 19 If thou escape from a Lyon, a Beare shall meete thee: if thou shut thy selfe into a house, a serpent shall bite thee. So this phrase of speech is oft vsed in the scriptures, to promise forgiveness of sinnes, when release of paine is sought for.

It behooueth vs also to vse this order in prayers, that being admonished of our sinnes, by the feeling of our sorrowes, we might first be carefull to obtaine forgiveness, that God being reconciled vnto vs, might withdraw his handes from punishing.

3. *And behold, certaine of the Scribes.* They accuse Christ of blasphemy, and of sacriledge, because hee challengeth that vnto himselfe, which is proper to God. For the other two Euangelistes doe adde, who can forgie sinnes, but God alone. Also it is not to be doubted, but that their desire to speake euill, caried them headlong to this wicked iudgement. If they thinke it worthy to bee reprobued, why doe they not search it out? Then, sith the speech is ambiguous, and Christ speaketh no otherwise, then the Prophetes were woont, when they witnessed the grace of God, why doe they take it in the worse part, which might be more fauourably interpreted? Therefore it appeareth, that they were first infected with euill will and choler, which doe to gladly take an occasion to condemne Christ. Also they doe secretly imagine in their heartes, how in his absence they may dislame him amongst their companions. This is truly sayd of them, that God onely hath power and authoritie to forgie sinnes, but they conclude euill, that it belongeth not to Christ, when as hee was God manifested in the flesh. It was their dutie to haue demanded by what right Christ tooke that authoritie vpon him. Now, without any inquirie, they imagine him to bee some of the common sort of men, they do rashly proceede to condemne him.

4. *When Iesus saw their thoughts.* Herein doth he make a manifest shew of his godhead, in that he vttereth their secret thoughts. For no man knoweth what is in man, saue his spirit, 1. Cor. 2. 11. Therefore Marke addeth that he knew in his spirit. as if he should haue sayd, man could not discern that, which lay hid in the hearts: but Christ by his diuine spirit searched and peirced thither. And he saith, that they thought euill things, not that it greiued the to haue that attributed to a mortal man, which God challengeth to himselfe alone: but because they did

did proudly and maliciously refuse GOD, offering himselfe openly vnto them.

5. *Whether is it easier.* The meaning is: Sith it is not easier by a worde to giue life to a dead body, then to forgiue sinnes, it ought not to be wondred at, that hee forgiueth sinnes, whereas he performeth the other. But Christ seemeth to reason very slenderly: For as much as the soule excelleth the body: so much doth forgiuenes of sinnes, exceede the curing of the body. But it is easily answered: for Christ applyeth his speech to their capacitie, which as they were men vnregenerate: so were they more moued with outward signes, then with all the spirituall power of Christ, which auayled to euerlasting saluation. So in Iohn 5. 28. he proueth the effectuall power of the Gospell to giue life to men by this, that at the last day hee will raise vp with his voyce the dead out of their graues. Therefore this argument was forcible enough to confute them, which did moste esteeme of an outward miracle, that they could not rightly denie, but that hee had forgiuen the sicke mans sinnes, while that hee restored him strength and health: because that the forgiuenesse of sinnes appeared by this effect.

6. *Hath authoritie in earth.* This power was farre beyond that, which was committed to the Apostles, and which the Pastors of the Church do execute at this day. For they doe not forgiue, but testifie forgiuenes, while that they viter the ambassage committed vnto them. But Christ in these words affirmeth, that he is not onely a minister and a witness of this grace, but also the authour of the same. But what meaneth that clause, *upon earth*? For why should hee say, that we had our sinnes forgiuen vs here, except the same were confirmed in heauen? Namely, this was the will of Christ, to shew that they neede not to seeke farre for forgiuenesse of sinnes: because that in his person it was brought as it were into mens handes. For (such is our readinesse to distrust) wee neuer dare account GOD to be mercifull towards vs, except hee comming neere, doe shewe himselfe familiarly vnto vs. Now, because that Christ for this cause came downe to the earth, that hee might offer to men the present grace of God, hee is sayd to forgiue sinnes *upon earth*: because that in him, and through him the will of God was reuealed, which, to the capacitie of the flesh, was hid before, about the cloudes.

8. *When the multitude saw it.* For this marueiling, whereof here is mention made, the other two doe say they were astonied or amased. Luke also addeth that they were afraide: but it is the purpose of them all to teach, that the power of God was not only simply known, but that they were all thicken into a marueiling: so that they were enforced to giue the glory to God. But the feare which followed this marueiling, preuayled thus farre, that they should not murmur against Christ, but that they should reuerently submit themselves vnto him, as to a Prophet of God.

Mathewe expressely sayth, that they glorified GOD, which had giuen such power vnto men: wherein they seeme to bee farre wide. For though they see a mann with their eyes, yet in their mind they ought to behold in him somewhat aboue manne. This was well done, that they affirme that the

nature

nature of man in Christ was endued with so great power, for the good of all mankind, but their confession was somewhat erroneous, because they do not as yet vnderstand him to be God, manifested in the flesh. In summe this was true, that God had giuen such power to men, but these men, which knew not the maiellie of God ioyned with flesh, did not as yet vnderstand the maner & cause of the giuing.

Mathew. 9.

Marke. 2

Luke. 5.

9. And as Iesus passed forth from thence, he saw a man sitting at the receite of custome, named Mathew: and he said vnto him, follow me, and he arose, and followed him.

10. And it came to passe, as Iesus sate at meate in his house beeholde many Publicans and sinners, that came thither, sate downe at the table, with Iesus and his disciples.

11. And when the Pharises saw that, they sayde to his disciples, why eateth your maister with Publicans and sinners?

12. Now when Iesus heard it, hee sayd vnto them, the whole neede not the Phisition, but they that are sicke.

13. But go yee, and learne what this is, I will haue mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

13. Then hee went againe towards the sea, and all the people resorted vnto him, and he taught them.

14. And as Iesus passed by, he saw Leui the son of Alphaeus sit at the receit of custome and said vnto him, follow me and he arose & followed him

15. And it came to passe, as Iesus sate at table in his house, many Publicans and sinners, sate at table also with Iesus and his disciples: for ther were many that followed him.

16. And when the Scribes & Pharises saw him eate with the Publicans and sinners, they sayd vnto his disciples, how is it, that hee eateth and drinketh with Publicans & sinners?

17. Now, when Iesus heard it, hee sayde vnto them: the whole haue no neede of the Phisition, but the sicke, I came not to call the righteous, but the sinners to repentance.

27. And after that he went forth and saw a Publican, named Leui, sitting at the receite of custome, and sayd vnto him, follow me.

28. And he left all, rose vp, and followed him.

29. Then Leui made him a great feast in his owne house, where there was a great company of Publicans, and of o-ther, which sate at table with them.

30. But they that were Scribes and Pharises among them, murmured againste his Disciples, saying, why eate yee, and drinke yee with Publicans and sinners?

31. Then Iesus answered, & sayd vnto them, they that are whole, neede not the Phisition, but they that are sicke.

32. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

9. Sitting at the receit of custome. That Mathew is receiued frō the custome house (which place as it was wont to be giuen to spoyles & vniust exactions, so it was then become most infamous) not only into the felowship of Christ, but is also called to the office of an Apostle: We haue herein a notable example of the fauour of God. And it was the will of Christ to chuse into that office not onely simple and vlearned men, that he might ouerthrow the wisdom of the world, but also this Publican, which had liued a life not to bee commended, full of diuers corruptions that he might be a spectacle of his gracious goodnes, and that

hee

he might teach in his person, that the calling of vs all doth not depende vppon the determining of our owne righteousnesse, but vpon his mereliberallitie. Therefore *Matth.* was not only a witnesse & a preacher of the grace giuen in Christe, but also a testimonie & a figure of the same. Now in this he declareth his thankfulness, that he is not ashamed to commit to perpetuall memory what manner of man he was, & from whence he was taken, that he might the more set forth the grace of Christ in his owne person. After the same maner speaketh *Paul*, *1. Tim.* 1. 15. This is a true saying, & by all meanes worthy to be receiued, that Christe Iesus came into the world to saue sinners, of whome I am chiefe. It appeareth that this was a gentile name, in that *Marke* & *Luke* do name him *Leuy*. but the cause why he tooke this forren name was because he was a Publican. *Follow me*. It is not to be doubted, but that Christ shewed in moe words to what purpose, & vpon what condition he called him: and that is more plainly gathered out of *Luke*, who sayth that he arose, & left all, that he might follow Christ. For it was not necessary, that he should haue left all things, except he had bin called to be a daily disciple of Christ, & in hope of an Apostleship. Further, we behold the diuine efficacie of the voyce of Christ, in this, that he is so quickly ready to obey: not that it inwardly pierceth alike into the hearts of all men, in to whose eares it soundeth. But it was the will of Christ to shew a singular example in this man, that we might know that he was not called by man.

L. V. 29. And he made him a feast. This seemeth to differ from that which *Luke* had sayd, that hee left all things: But the answer is easie, *Matth.* reflecting all impedimentes, giueth himselfe wholly to Christ: yet so that hee did not cast away his substance belonging to his houshold. While *Paul* by the example of souldiers exhorteth the ministers of the word, that they being freed & deliuered from all impedimentes, shoulde imploy their endeauour vpon the church, saith, *2. Tim.* 2. 4. No man that warreth, entangleth himselfe with the assayres of this life: because he would please him, that hath chosen him to be a souldier: but he doth not meane that they which are chosen to be souldiers, doe diuorce their wiues from them, forsake their children, & renounce their houses for euer: but for a time to abstaine from their houses and from all cares. Nothing withheld *Matthew*, but that he followed whether Christ called him, & yet so farre as the estate of his calling did permit, hee did freely vse his house and his goodes. But it behooued him to bid the custome house fare well: because that being occupied there, hee could not bee a companion of Christ. The greatness of the feast is not so much referred to the multitude of the guests, as to the plentie and daintinesse of the meates. For wee knowe that Christ vsed not that austierie, but that hee suffered himselfe sometime to bee daintily entertained of rich menne, yet so as all gluttony was seclused. And it is not to be doubted, but as hee was a singular example of ten perauce, so hee would exhort his hostes to a moderate and a meane diet, and would neuer suffer prodigall and excessive daintyes. That *Matthew* sayeth that sinners came that is, menne of most wicked life, or noted with infamie: by this it came to passe, that the Publicans did not eschew the company of suche, because that they themselves were commonly hated and infamous. For as a litle corruption doeth make them that sinne ashamed: so too much leuening doeth

drive some to dispaire, so that they casting by all shame, doe throw themselves into all filthinesse. It was no offence to gather tribute or custome: but when as the Puplicans sawe themselves reiecte as prophane and detestable menne, through the common reproach, they did not despic, but reioyced in the company of the infamous, and sometimes they thrust in themselves amongst the adulterers, the drunkards, and such like: whose wickednes they would haue condemned, and they would haue beene nothing like them, if they had not beene driven to this necessitie by open hatred and reproches.

MAT. 11. *Why eateth your maister with Publicans.* The Scribes doe asfalt the disciples of Christe, and that they may procure them to fall a way, they lay forth that, which at the first sight is euill and shamefull. For, to what purpose became hee a peculiar maister to them, but that they should withdraw themselves from the common people, that they might leade a more holy life. But it seemeth that he leadeth them from an honest and tollerable estate of life to a prophane lyccentiousnelle, that they might defile themselves with filthy gustes. This reproach might haue driven the disciples, which were as yet but rude and flexible, to forsake their maister. But they doe well, in that they make their cōplaint to their master: because they themselves were not sufficiently armed against this caul: for Christ answering for them, confirmeth them against the time to come.

12. *The whole need not.* By Christes answere it appeareth that the Scribes offended two wayes: that they made no account of the office of Christ: & in sparing their owne faultes, they doe proudly despise all others. Which thing must therefore be noted: because that this disease hath alwayes been too common. For hypocrites being full and drunken with a windie hope of their own righteousnesse, doe not accounte wherefore Christe was sent into the earth: they knowe not in howe great a laborinth of mischiefes mankind is drowned, how horrible a wrath and curse of God doeth lie vpon all menne, and with how confused a heape of sinnes they are pressed downe: and so it commeth to passe, that they being not mooued with the miseries of menne, do neuer thinke vpon any remedy. And now they pleasing themselves, will not abide to bee brought into order, and they thinke themselves vnworthy to be accounted amongst sinners. Christ reprocureth this second errour, by answering that the whole need not the Physition. For by a figure he teacheth that they are therefore offended at the beholding of sinners: because they challenge themselves to be righteous. Because (sayeth he) you are whole, you despise the sicke, so that you loath them, and the sight of them is troublesome vnto you: but it behooueth a Physition to bee farre otherwise. After he sheweth that hee must take vpon him the parte of a Physition, because that he was sent of the father to call sinners. And though Christe beginneth with reprocuring them: yet if we desire to profit in his doctrine, that must be especially holden, which he setteth downe in the second place: namely, that his comming was, that hee might giue life to the dead, that he might iustifie the guiltie and condemned, that hee might cleanse the polluted, and them that are defiled with filthinesse: that hee might pull them that are lost euen from the helles: that hee might cloath them with his glory, which are couered with filthinesse: that he might renew the that are corrupt.

corrupt with the filthinesse of finnes, and prepare them for a blessed immortallitie.

If wee consider that this is his dutie and the ende of his comming, if wee remember that for this cause hee put vpon him our flesh, shed his bloud, became a sacrifice of death, and descended euen to hell, it shall neuer seeme strange vnto vs, the vilest amongst men, eue those that are couered with a dunghill of sins, are gathered by him into saluation.

Hee seemeth to thee to be vnworthy of the grace of Christ, whome thou doest abhorre: why then became Christ a sacrifice for sinne, and accursed, but that hee might reach out his hande to accursed sinners? Nowe if wee begin to loath that both Baptisme, and also the holy Supper doth ioyne vs in companie with wicked men: so that their company shall seeme to defile vs with any blot, let vs presently enter into our selues to search our owne finnes without flattery. And this examination shall bring vs to this passe, that we will gladly suffer our selues to be washed in the same fountaine with the most vncleane, so that wee will not refuse that righteousnesse, which hee commonly offreth to all the wicked, that life giuen to the dead, and saluation to them that were lost.

13. *Goe yee, and learne.* Hee sendeth them away, and commandeth them to depart: because they seemed to be stubborne, and such as would not learne. Or he sheweth that they contend with God and the Prophet, which through pride being become cruell, doe grudge that the wretched should be holpen, and that phisicke should be ministred to the sicke. This testimonie is taken out of the prophet Ose. 6. 6. where the Prophet preaching of the vengeance of God against the Iewes, least they should take exception that they obserued the outward worship of God, as they were accustomed in securitie to brag of their ceremonies: hee affirmeth that God is not pleased with their sacrifices, where their mindes are voide of godlines, and their maners estranged from integritie and righteousnes. But that God sayth, that he will not haue sacrifices, appeareth by the second clause to bee spoken by comparison, that the knowledge of God is more to be desired then sacrifices. By which wordes hee doth not precisely reiect sacrifices: but hee maketh lesse account of them, then of godlines and faith. Yet wee must so account, that faith and spirituall worship do of them selues please God, that charitie and the duties of men towards their neighbours are required for themselves. The sacrifices are but accidents (as they say) which are of no estimation or account, whereas truth it selfe is wanting. Of the which thing I haue entreated more at large vpon the tenth chapter to the Hebrewes. In that word *mercie* the figure Synecdoche is to bee noted: For vnder one part the Prophet comprehendeth what dutie soeuer wee owe vnto our brethren.

For I came not. Although this is spoken to ouerthrowe the pride and the hypocrisie of the Scribes: yet it generally containeth a very profitable doctrine. For wee are admonished that the grace of Christ shall no otherwise profit vs, then while wee beeing greiued with our finnes, and fighting vnder the burthen of them, doe humbly come vnto him. Againe,

weake consciences are here put in a certaine hope: for they need not feare least Christ should reiect sinners, because he descended from his heavenly glory to call them.

But that clause is also to be considered, *to repentance*: that wee might knowe that our forgiveness is not such, as nourisheth finnes; but such as callt vs to endeavour our selues to liue holy and godly. For he reconcileth vs to the father with this condition, that being redeemed with his blood, wee should offer our selues true sacrifices, as Paul teacheth, Titus 2. 12. Herein appeareth the mercie and loue of God, that denying worldly lustes, we should liue soberly and righteously, &c.

Mathevv 9.

14. Then came the disciples of Iohn to him, saying: why doe wee and the Pharises fast oft, & thy disciples fast not?

15. And Iesus sayde vnto them, can the children of the mariage chamber moun as long as the bridegroom is with them; but the daies will come, when the bridegroom shall be taken from them, & then shall they fast.

16. Moreover, no man pecceth an old garment with a peece of newe cloath: for that that should fill it vp, taketh away from the garment and the breach is worse.

17. Neither do they put new wine into olde vessels: for then the vessels would breake, and the wine would be spilt, and the vessels should perish: but they put new wine into new vessels, and so are both preserved.

Marke 2.

18. And the disciples of Iohn, and the Pharises: did fast, and came and said vnto him, why do the disciples of Iohn and the pharises fast, & thy disciples fast not?

19 And Iesus said vnto them, can the childre of the mariage fast, whiles the bridegroom is with them? as long as they haue the bridegroom with them, they cannot fast.

20. But the daies will come, when the bridegroom shall bee taken from them, & then shall they fast in those daies.

21. Also no man seweth a peece of new cloath in an old garment: for else the new peece taketh away the filling vp from the old, and the breach is worse.

22. Likewise no man putteth newe wine into olde vessels: for else the new breaketh the vessels and the wine runneth out, and the vessels are lost: but new wine must be put into new vessels.

Luke 5

33. Then they sayd vnto him, why doe the disciples of Iohn fast oft, & pray, and the disciples of the Pharises also, but thine eate and drinke?

34. And hee sayd vnto them, can yee make the children of the wedding chamber to fast, as long as the bridegroom is with them?

35. But the daies will come, when the bridegroom shall bee taken from them: then shall they fast in those daies.

36. Again hee spake also to them in a parable: no man putteth a peece of a newe garment into an olde vessel: for then the newe remeth it, and the peece taken outte of the newe, agreeth not with the olde.

37. Also no manne powreth newe wine into olde vessels: for then the newe wine will breake the vessels, and it will runne out, and the vessels will perish.

38. But newe wine must bee poured into new vessels: so both are preserved.

39. Also no manne that drinketh olde wine, straight way desireth newe: for hee sayeth, the old is better.

14. *Then came.* Luke bringeth in the Pharisees speaking: Marke seemeth to ioyne them lott together. And it is not to bee doubted, but that the Pharisees maliciously endeouored by this subtiltie to drawe the disciples of Iohn to their side, and to quarrell with the disciples of Christ. Their likenes in prayers and fastings was a plausible baight to make them ioyne in fellowship: And the contrary behauiour of Christe was an occasion of discord & displeasure to the forwardes and them that were too much giuen to please themselves. By this example wee are admonished wisely to take heede, least wicked and crafty menne doe by any light pretence sowe discordes amongst vs. Truly Sathan is a malicious workeman in forging such deceites: and it is an easie matter to disturbe vs about a matter of nothing. And we must especially beware, least for outward rites the content of sayth be hindered, and the band of charitie be broken. All men almost are troubled with this disease, so that they attribute more then is meete to ceremonies and elementes of the world (as Paul calleth them, Colloſſ. 2. 8. Galla. 4. 3, 9.) So that they doubt not to preterre those first rudimentes farre beyond the chiefe perfection.

Then followeth of forwardnesse and pride an other mischiefe: for that all menne woulde gladly dring the whole worlde to followe their example. If any thing please vs, wee doe presently desire that it shoulde passe for a law, that others shoulde liue according to our pleasure. When wee reade heere that the disciples of Iohn were taken with the snares of Sathan: let vs firste learne that holinesse consisteth not in things that bee outward and indifferent, and also to bridle vs with the bridle of moderation and equitie, least wee desire to binde others to follow our pleasure: but let euery manne remaine in his owne liberty. I thinke that Iohn exercised his disciples in a certaine rule of fasting and prayers, and hadde for that ende certaine appoynted dayes for fastings, and a prescripte forme, & certaine appointed houres for prayers: & therefore I accounte these prayers amongst outward rites. For though calling vpon GOD is one of the chiefeſt in spirituall worshippe, yet the same beeing framed to the rude capacitie of menne, is worthily accounted amongst Ceremonies and things indifferent, the obseruation whercof ought not too seuerely to bee vrged. Nowe, why Iohns discipline was more streight then Christes, I haue sayde other where, and shall haue more conuenient place to speake of the same againe.

15. *The children of the bridegrome.* Christe excuseth his disciples by the circumstance of the time: because that God woulde as yet handle them gently, as if they were in the marriage chamber. For hee compareth himselfe to a bridegrome, which maketh his friendes merry with his presence.

Chrysostome thinketh that this similitude was taken out of the testimonie of Iohn Baptist. He that hath the bride is the bridegrome: which opinion I doe not reſrooue, but I do not thinke that it is of sufficient force. Let this satisfie vs, that Christe sayeth, that he spareth and cherisheth his disciples so long as he is conuerſant with them.

But, least any manne shoulde enuy that short time of pleasure which they hadde, hee declareth that they shall shortly bee handled more hardly & more

streightly . And so this is the excuse, that prayers and fasting doe belong to them that are sadde and in aduersitie : I speake of the extraordinary prayers, whereof he maketh mention in this place . But it was Christes will by a little at once to accustome them to beare greater thinges; and hee woulde not lay a greater burden vppon them, vntill they had gotten more strength.

Hereof for doctrine may two thinges bee gathered : we may not murmure, if God at any time doe beare with the infirmitie of our brethren, and do handle them gently, while that hee doeth handle vs more hardly and more streightly . Then, if at any time God giue vs a release from sorrow and troubles, we must take heede that wee become not drunken with delightes, but let vs rather remember that the maryages shall not last alwayes . The children of the bridegroom, or of the bride chamber, is vsed in the Hebrew phraze for the guests bidden to the mariage.

16. *No man peeceth an olde garment.* Hee confirmeth the former sentence with two similitudes : whereof one is taken of garments, and the other of wine vessels. They that thinke that olde garments and olde bottles are compared to the Pharises, and the newe wyne and newe cloath to the doctrine of the Gospel, haue no colour. But the similitude is very apte and fitte for the present matter : if wee interpret this of the weake and tender disciples of Christ, and of discipline more harde and streight then they were able to beare . Hee reporteth it not, as if antiquitie were not fitte for young schollers : neyther doeth Christe compare his disciples to olde bottles, and torne garmentes, as if they had beene worne with long vse : but because they were weake, & not strong enough.

The summe is this, that all menne generally are not to bee driven to one, and the same manner of lyuing : because their estate is vnlike, and all thinges doe not agree to all menne, the weake are especially to bee borne with, least they bee broken with violence, or ouerthrowne with the weight of the burden. Further, Christe speaketh after the manner of the country : in that hee vseth the name of bottles for barrells or firkinnes.

L V. 39. *No manne that drinketh olde wine.* Luke only maketh mention of this, and it doeth very well agree with that, which goeth before. And although it is diuersly wrested by the interpreters : yet I doe simply take it to bee an admonition to the Pharises, least they giue more credit then is meete to an olde receiued custome . For howe commeth it to passe that wine not altering the taste, shoulde not please all mennes mouthes alike : but because that vse and custome doeth frame the taste? By this order, which Christ vseth towards his disciples, it followeth that, that, which hath but small pompe and shewe, is nothing lesse to be accounted of : as olde wine, though it doth not so fume as newe wine doth, yet it is as pleasant, and as good for nourishing the body.

Mat. 9.

12. While hee thus spake vnto them: beholde there came a certaine ruler, & worshipped him, saying: My daughter is nowe deceased, but come and lay thine hand on her, and shee shall liue. 19. And Iesus arose & followed him with his disciples. 20. And beholde, a woman which was diseased with an issue of bloude 12. yeares, came behind him, & touched the hem of his garment. 21. For she sayd in her selfe: If I may touch but his garment only I shall be whole. 22. Then Iesus turned him about, & seeing her did saye: daughter bee of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole: and the woman was made whole at that houre.

Marke. 5.

22. And beholde there came one of the rulers of the Synagogue, whose name was Iairus: and when he saw him, he fell downe at his feete. 23. And besought him instantly, saying: My little daughter lieth at the poynt of death: I pray thee that thou wouldest come and lay thy handes on her, that shee may be healed, and liue. 24. The he went with him, & a great multitude followed him, & thronged him. 25. And there was a certaine woman, which was diseased with an issue of bloud twelve yeares. 26. And hadde suffered many thinges of Phisitions, and had spent al that shee had, and it auailed her nothinge, but shee became much worse. 27. And when shee had heard of Iesus, shee came in the prease behinde, and touched his garment. 28. For shee sayde: if I may touch but his clothes, I shall bee whole. 29. And straight way the course of her bloude was dried vpp, and shee felt in her body, that she was healed of that plague. 30. And when Iesus did knowe in himselfe the vertue that went out of him, hee turned him round about in the prease, and sayd, who hath touched my cloathe? 31. And his disciples sayde vnto him: Thou seest the multitude throng thee, and sayest thou who did touch mee? 32. And hee looked round about, to see her that had done that. 33. And the woman feared and trembled: for she knewe what was done in her, and shee came and fell downe before him, and tolde him the whole truth. 34. And hee sayde to her: daughter thy faith hath made thee whole: Goe in peace, and be whole of thy plague.

Luke 8.

40. And it came passe to whē Iesus was come againe, that the people receiued him, for they all waited for him. 41. And beholde there came a man named Iairus, & he was the ruler of the Synagogue, who fel downe at Iesus feete, & besought hī that he would come into his house. 42. For he had but a daughter only, about twelue yeares of age, & she lay a dying, & as he went the people thronged him. 43. And a woman hauing an issue of bloud 12. yeares long, which had spent al her substance vpon Phisitions, & could not bee healed of any. 44. Whē she came behind him, she touched the hem of his garment, & immediately her issue of bloud stanchēd. 45. The Iesus said, who is it & hath touched me? when euery man denied, Peter saide, and they that were with hī, master the multitude thrust thee, & tread on thee, & sayest thou whohath touched me? 46. And Iesus said Som one hath touched me: for I perceiue & vertue is gon frō me. 47. Whē the woman saw that shee was not hid, she came trembling, & fell down before hī, & told him before all the people, for what cause she had touched hī, & how she was healed immediately. 48. And he said vnto her: daughter be of good comfort, thy faith hath made thee whole goe in peace.

10. While he thus spake. They that imagine that Marke and Luke doe not sette downe the same history which Mathewe doeth, are so playnely confuted

confuted out of the text, so that it neede not any long disputation. Three with one mouthe doe say that Christe was required by the ruler of the Synagogue that he would come to his house to heale his daughter. In this they differ, that the name of Iairus is suppressed by Matthew, is set downe by Marke and Luke. And he bringeth in the father speaking thus: my daughter is deceased, the other two doe say that she was at the poynt of death, and that hee was tolde of her death by the way, as he was bringing Christ. But in that there is no difficultie: for Matthew endeououring to bee short, doeth in a word set downe together those things which the other do digest distinctly in their places. But seeing all other things do so aptly agree together, sith so many circumstances doe concord in one, as it three figures should seeme to bee directed together to shew one thing, no reason doth suffer this history to be drawne to diuers times. The Euangelistes doe with one mouth declare, that when Christe was required of the ruler of the Synagogue to come to his house, by the way a woman was healed of an issue of blood by a secret touching of his garment, and that Christ after hee was come into the rulers house, did raise a dead maiden. So I doe not thinke it needfull to vse a long circumstance of words, to prouoe that the three doe report one & the same history. Let vs now come to the particulars. *Beholde a certaine ruler.* Although it appeareth by the other two Euangelistes that his faith was not so strong, that he hoped that he could restore his daughter to life: yet it is not to be doubted, but that hee being rebuked by Christe, conceived a greater hope then he had brought from home. But Matthew (as it is saide) endeavouring to be short, placeth in the beginning that which was wrought in successe of time, yet the history is thus to be gathered: that Iairus first demanded to haue his daughter cured of her disease: and then to be restored from death to life, after, when Christ had encouraged him Worshipping is taken for the bowing of the knee, as we gather by the words of Marke & Luke. for Iairus did not giue diuine honour to Christ, but worshipped him as a Prophet of God. And it is well known that the bowing of the knee was very common amongst the inhabitants of the East. *Come and lay thine hand ou her.* Wee haue here a notable spectacle of the fauour of God towards vs: if thou comparest the ruler of the Synagogue, with the Centurion a heathen man, thou wilt say that in him there was a full great light, & in this feeble one little drop of faith: he imagineth that Christ hath no power to do her good, except he touch her, and hauing receiued word of her death, he is so a fraide as though there were no further remedie. Therefore we see that his faith was weake and very colde: but that Christe yeeldeth to his requestes, and encourageth him to hope well, declareth that his faith how small so euer it was, was not vntierly rectified. Therefore though we be not instructed fully in the faith, as it were to bee wished, yet there is no cause why our weakenesse should hinder vs or drue vs from calling vpon God.

20. *A woman which was diseased with an issue of blood.* The Euangelistes doe expressly declare that this issue of blood hadde endured for the space of twelue yeares, and that the woman hadde not beene slacke in seeking remedies, in so much that shee had consumed all her substance vpon Phisitions, whereby the glory of the miracle was so much the greater. For it doeth evidently appeare that the disease being incurable, was not healed by the po-

ner of man, and that osodenly, and by the touching of his garment only. But that the woman thought shee could bee presently whole, if shee might onely touch his garment, was the singular worke of the holy Ghost, and may not bee drawen to a generall rule. Wee knowe how ouerthrowly superstition playeth with a foolish and an vnaduised imitation of holy men: but they are Apes and not imitators, which take vpon the to follow any onefingular exâple, without a commandement from God, and rather after the rowne fanisie, then by the direction of Gods spirit. Also it may be that the faith of the woman, had mixed in it some fault or error, which Christe through his mercy doeth tolerate and pardon. And that after shee was found to bee the partie, shee doth feare and tremble, such doubting cannot be excused, because it is contrary to faith. Why doth shee not rather directly come to Christ? If shee would not for reuerence, from whence then did shee hope for helpe, but by his mercie? Then how cometh it to passe that shee feareth as one that had offended, if shee were perswaded of his fauour? Christ vouchsafeth to commend her faith. For that is it which I touched euen now, God doth deale louingly and gently with his, so that hee accepteth their faith, though it be maimed and weake, not imputing the defects and wants of the same. Therefore this woman came to Christ by the direction of fayth. But that shee slacke in his garment, rather then shee would by prayers offer her selfe vnto him to be healed, shee did peradventure of an vnaduised zeale somewhat goe out of the way. especially sith that by and by after, shee sheweth that shee attempted it of a doubtfull and a wauering minde. But if we grant that shee was thus directed by the spirite, yet that rule remaineth faile: that our faith must not bee caried hither & thither by priuate examples, because it must be throughly grounded vpon the word of God, according to that saying of Paul, Rom. 10. 17. faith commeth by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

This admonition is very profitable, that we should not giue the title of faith to euery vaine conceiued opinion: *Who is it that toucheth?* Marke declareth it more plainly, that Christ looked about him, that he might know who it was. But this seemeth to bee absurde, that Christ should poure forth his grace, not knowing to whom he should doe good. And that is as hard that he sayth a little after, that he felt that power was gone out of him. As though it shoulde passe from him after any other order then of his free gift, when and to whom he shall thinke good to distribute the same. But it is not to be doubted but that wittingly and willingly hee healed the woman, and it is not to be doubted but that by his spirit he drew her vnto him that hee might heal her: but hee requireth her that shee would willingly come forth amongst the people. If Christ himselfe should haue declared his owne miracle, peradventure his wordes shoulde not haue bene beleueed: but now when as the fearefull woman telleth what is befallen vnto her, her confession hath the more credite.

22. *Daughter bee of good comfort.* The weakenesse of her faith is prooued by this speech: for if her fearefullnesse had not bene faultie, Christ would not haue reproued her, by exhorting her to bee of good comfort, yet hee also prayeth her faith, whereby is gathered that which I sayde before, when as by the direction of the the spirite and a sincere desire of godlines she sought Christ

y et shee wauered so that shee needed not to be confirmed. So wee see that faith th at it may please God, hath neede of forgiveness, and also to bee raysted with ne we helpes, that it may get more strength. Now this must Analogically be led from the healing of the bodie to the saluation of the soule: for as Christ attributeth the deliuerance of the woman from her disease to faith, so it is certaine that by faith which reconcileth vs to God, wee obtayne forgiveness of sinnes. When he commandeth her to goe in peace, and sayth that shee is healed of her disease, heereby wee gather that shee had then truely confirmed that benefite which shee had receiued, when as shee heareth that by the mouth of Christ which shee had now found by experience. For we cannot otherwise enioy the benefites of GOD truely and with a quiet conscience: but while wee possesse them hidden in the treasurie of his promises.

Mathew 9.

23. Now when Iesus came into the rulers house and sawe the minstrels and the multitude making noyse.
24. Hee sayde vnto them, get yee hence: for the mayd is, not dead, but sleepeeth. And they laughed him to scorne.
25. And when the multitude were put forth hee went in, and tooke her by the hand, and the maide arose.
26. And this bruse wente throughout all that land.

Marke 5.

35. While hee yet spake, there came from the rulers house certaine, which sayd: Thy daughter is dead. Why disturbancest thou thy maister any further.
36. As soone as Iesus heard that word spoken, he sayde vnto the ruler of the synagoge: Be not afraid, only beleewe.
37. And hee suffered no man to follow him, save Peter, James, and Iohn the brother of Iames.
38. So he came vnto the house of the ruler of the Synagoge, and sawe the tumult, and them that wept, and wailed greatly.
39. And he went in & saide vnto the why make ye this trouble and weepe? the child is not dead, but sleepeeth.
40. And they laughed him to scorne: but hee put them all out, and tooke the father and the mother of the child, & them that were with him, and entered in where the child lay.
41. And tooke the child by the hand, and said vnto her Tabitha cumi, which is by interpretation, maiden I say vnto thee arise.
42. And straight way the maiden arose and walked, for she was of the age of 12. yeares, and they were astonished out of measure.
43. And he charged them straightly, that no man should know of it, and commaunded to giue her meate.

Luke 8.

49. While hee yet spake, there came one from the ruler of the synagogues house, which sayd to him, Thy daughter is dead, disturbance not thy maister.
50. When Iesus heard it, he answered him, saying: Feare not, beleewe onely, and shee shall bee made whole.
51. And when he went into the house, he suffered no man to goe in with him, save Peter and James and Iohn, and the Father and the mother of the maide,
52. And all wept and sorrowed for her, but hee sayde: weepe not, for shee is not dead but sleepeeth.
53. And they laugh him to scorne, knowing that shee was dead
54. So he thrust them all out, and tooke her by the hande, and cryed, saying: maid, arise.
55. And her spirite came againe, and shee rose straight way and he commaunded to giue her meate.
56. Then her parentes were astonished, but hee commaunded them, that they shoulde tell no man what was done.

MARKE

MARK E. 36. *Bee not a fraide, only beleewe.* The message of death caused him to despaire, because hee hadde required nothing else of Christe, but that hee woulde helpe the sicke maide. Therefore Christe commaundeth that he shoulde not with feare and distrust shutte out all hope of grace, which death it selfe cannot hinder. For by this phrase *only beleewe*, he declareth that he wanteth not power, so that Iairus will accept him & he also exhorteth him to be of good comfort, for he cannot beleewe more, then God in his great power is able to perfourme. And verily it so faileth out with vs al: for god would deale more liberally with vs, if we were not so strait: but our hardnes of life doth hinder God, that he powre not his gifts more plentifully vpō vs. In sum, we are taught in this place, that we can neuer exceed measure in beleeuing, because our fayth howe large soeuer it be, can neuer conceiue the hūdred part of the goodnes of God.

37. *And he suffered no man.* He forbade them enterance, either because they were vnworthy to be witnessers of the myracle: or because that hee woulde not haue the myracle ouerwhelmed with the murmuring multitude: for it were better that the damsell whose body they had seene deade, shoulde sodainly come forth alieue and strong into the sight of men. Marke & Luke say that he tooke with him but three of his disciples, they both adde the parents: And Marke only sayth that he tooke them which were Iairus his companions when he came to require Christ. Matthew who is shorter, omitteth this circumstance.

L V K E. 52. *And all wept.* The Euangelists do make mention of mourning, that their hope in the resurrection may be the more certaine. Also Matthew sayth expressly that there were minstrels, which was not wont to bee, but whereas they were assured that the body was dead, and when as they prepared the funeralles. In the mournfull funeralles the pipe did found, sayth hee. And although they thought after this manner to honour their deade, and as it were to adorne their buriall, yet we see how the world is alwayes ready, not onely to nourish, but also to stirre vppe her owne faultes. It was their duty to apply themselues by all meanes to appease mourning, but as though they had not offended inough with their outrageous sorrow, with new prouocations they doe ambitiously prouok the same. The gētiles also thought that this melody appeased the ghosts wherby we gather with how many corruptions Iudea wasthe filled.

MARK E. 39. *But sleepesth.* To sleepe is taken in diuers places of the scripture, for, to die. And doubtlesse by this similitude gathered of the temporal rest, is noted the resurrection to come. And Christ doth here especially make a comparison betweene sleepe & death, that he might confirme the hope of life: as if he should haue sayd, you shall see her presently raised vp, whome now you thinke to be dead. And it is no maruell that he was laughed to scorne of blockish and grosse men, which were wholly occupied in prophane mourning, & vnderstoode not his purpose. And yet this auaieth to the setting forth of the myracle, that none of them doubted of her death.

41. *Heetooke her by the hande and sayde.* Although this crie did naturally profite nothing to the weakeninge of the senses of the deade, yet doeth Christe heere shewe notably the power of his voyce, that hee might the more accustome menne to giue eare to his doctrine. And herein appeareth how effectually the voyce of Christ is, which peirceth vnto the dead, so as it giueth

ueth life euen in death it selfe. Therefore Luke sayeth that her spirit came againe: as if he shoulde haue sayd; that the spirit being called by the commaundement of Christe, was straightway present,

43. *And charged them.* Although Christe woulde not generally admit all to behold her raising vpp, yet the myracle could not remayne long hid. And it was not meete to suppress the power of God, whereby the whole world was prepared to life. Why then did he commaund the maides parentes to silence? It may bee that his will was that they should not so much conceale the thing it selfe as the maner, and that only but for a time: for we see in other places alio, how hee sought for opportunitie. They that thinke that they were forbidden to speake, that they might be the more whetted on, are hardly taken, when they flee to this answer. I graunt that Christ wrought not this myracle, but that it shoulde be vttered, but at a more apt time, or when the multitude was dismissed, where was no meane nor moderation. Therefore he would giue them space that the more quietly and aduisedly they might consider the worke of God.

Matthew. 9.

Marke.

Luke.

27. *And as Iesus departed thence, two blind men followed him, crying and saying: O sunne of David, haue mercy vpon vs.*

28. *And when hee was come into the house, the blinde men came to him, and Iesus saide vnto them: beleeue yee that I am able to doe this? and they sayd vnto him, yea Lorde.*

29. *Then touched he their eyes, saying: according to your sayth be it vnto you.*

30. *And their eyes were opened, and Iesus charged them, saying: See that no man know it.*

31. *But when they were departed they spread abroad his fame through out all that land.*

32. *And as they went out, behold they brought to him a dumbe man possessed with a deuill.*

33. *And when the deuill was cast out, the dumbe spake: Then the multitude marvelled saying: the like was neuer scene in Israel.*

34. *But the Pharisees sayde: Hee casteth out deuils, through the prince of deuils.*

27. *And as Iesus departed.* The other Euangelistes do say nothing of these 2. myracles for, as we haue sayd other where, and Iohn doeth plainly affirme that it was not their purpose to rehearse all the deedes of Christ, but onely to gather some principall poyntes, which proue him to be the Messias. Further, Matthew sayeth that two blinde men were restored to their sight, but not so speedily, as often other where hee was accustomed to helpe the miserable. For he doth not answere them as they cry after him in the way, but as though he dissembled the matter, he suffereth the to follow him into the house. There he doth at length enquire of them what they do beleeue of his power. Therefore his minde was in deede and woordes to examine their faith, for hee holding them in suspense

pence, nay passing by as though he heard not, he maketh a triall of their patience, and what roote faith had taken in their mindes. After, when he demandeth whether they beleue, he prosecuteth the same examination. But it may be demanded whether to be perswaded of the power of Christ and of God, is sufficient to make any man faithfull. For thus much doe the words signifie, doe you beleue me, that I can doe it? But it appeareth out of diuers other places of the Scripture, that the knowledge of the power is but vaine and colde, except wee be assured of his will. Yet Christ being satisfied with their answer, approueth their faith as perfect in all poynts, and answereth, when at the first they confessed him to be the sonne of Dauid, they conceived somewhat of the grace. For with this title they honoured the redeemer of their nation, and the author of all their good. Therefore he demanding of his owne power, hee doeth more deeply enquire, whether they doe constantly beleue. Therefore faith comprehendeth the mercie and fatherly loue of God with power, & the ready will of Christ with might. But because that men doe commonly attribute lesse to the power of God and might of Christ then is meete, the blinde men are not asked without a cause, whether they beleue that Christe can doe that which they profess, though the purpose of Christ was simply to know whither that first their heart they gaue to him the honour of the Messias. And for this cause is their faith approued, that in so base and contemptible an estate, they acknowledged the sonne of Dauid.

29. *According to your faith.* Although it is sayd that this benefite is especially bestowed vpon two blind men, yet out of these present words of Christ, wee may gather this generall doctrine, that we shall neuer be suffered to depart without our requests, so that we pray with faith. If that these two by a small fayth as yet not thoroughly grounded, do obtaine that which they require, much more at this day shall their faith preuaile which being endued with the spirit of adoption, and made partakers of the sacrifice of the mediatur, doe come to God.

30. *He charged them.* Eyer his will was to haue other witnesses of the miracle, or else that he would deferre the report thereof to another time. Therefore that is worthy to be reprobued, that they doe vtter the same presently euery where. For that some imagine that Christ forbade them, that hee might the rather stirre them forward we haue confuted in another place. It is certaine there was some cause of forbidding which is vnknowne vnto vs: but these men of an vnaduised zeale doe viter it before the time.

32. *They brought vnto him a dumbe man.* It is probable that this man was not dumbe by nature, but when he was deliuered vp to the deuill, that he was deprived of his speech: yet all those that are dumbe, are not possessed of deuils. But this man was so afflicted, that by manifest signes it appeared that his tongue was tied, and that after his healing the people do cry out, that the like was neuer seene in Israell, seemeth to be an hyperbolicall kinde of speech: for by greater miracles had God in times past reuealed his glory amongst that people. But it may be that they had regard to the end of the miracle, so that then the mindes of all men were stirred vp to looke for the coming of the Messias. And they so extold the present grace of God, so as they would diminish nothing from his former works. And it is to be noted, that this speech was not premeditate, but such as in admiration brake out suddenly.

34. *The Pharisees sayd.* Heereby it appeareth how mad they were, which were not afraid to defame with wicked speech so notable a worke of GOD For the Antithesis is to be noted betwene the praise of the people and the blasphemie of these men. For that the people sayth the like was neuer done in Israel, was a confession proceeding from a feeling of the glory of God Whereby it doeth the better appeare that these men were starke madde, which durst blaspHEME God to his face. Yet we are also taught, when wickednes is growen to extremitie, that there is none to manifest a worke of God which it will not perueit. But this is monstrous, seldome scene and incredible, that mortall men should rise vp against their maker: but that blindnesse is so much the more to be feared, (which I spake of before) whereby the Lord after his long sufferance executeth his vengeance vpon the wicked.

Mathew. 9

Marke

Luke.

35. *And Iesus went about all cities and townes, teaching in their Synagogues, and preaching the Gospell of the kingdome, and healing euery sicknesse, and euery disease among the people.*

36. *But when hee sawe the multitude, hee had compassion vpon them, because they were dispearsed and scattered abroad, as sheepe hauing no shepheards.*

37. *Then sayd hee to his disciples, surely the haruest is great, but the labourers are few.*

38. *Wherefore pray the Lord of the haruest, that hee would send forth labourers into his haruest.*

35. *And he went about.* This is spoken by preuention, that wee might knowe that the whole ministerie of Christ is not particularly described: but generally, that he was diligent in his office, namely that he might publish the doctrine of saluation, and confirme the same by miracles. We haue sayd in an other place before, that it is called the Gospell of the kingdome of the effect: because that by this means God doth gather vnto himselfe a people that was miserably dispersed, that he might traigne in the midst of them: and for that cause truly hath he rayed vp his throne, that he might endue all his with full felicitie. Yet let vs remember that it behooueth vs to become subiect to God, that by him we may be caried into celestiall glory.

36 *He had compassion vpon them* Hereby we gather first how sluggish the priests were, which being placed through out the whole land, that they might shewe forth the light of the heavenly doctrine, were become idle bellies. And they proudly boasted themselves to be the chiefe bishops of the people: and there was no small multitude of the which gloried in this title: yet Christ acknowledgeth none of them to be pastours. The same want is found at this day in Poperie, which yet is replenished with pastorall titles: for great is that sinke or heape of that lewd companie which vnder the name of the cleargie doe deuoure vp the people. For though they be dumbe dogges, yet they are not ashamed arrogant-ly to bragge of their hierarchie. But the worde of Christ is to be heard which sayeth that there are no pastours, whereas there are no labourers, and that those

those sheepe are wandring and disperfed, which are not gathered together into the folde of God by the doctrine of the Gospell. And in that he is touched with compaffion, he proueth himfelfe to bee a faithfull minifter of his Father, in caring for the faluation of the people, for whose fake he had taken vpon him our flethe. And though hee is nowe receiued into heauen, and hath not the fame affections, whereunto he was fubieft in this mortall life, yet hee cafteth not away the care of his Church: but he hath regard vnto his wandering sheepe and his owne flocke cruelly put to flight and fcattered by the wolues.

37. *The haruest is great.* By this Metaphore he declareth that many of the common fort were ready to receiue the Gospell. For though the greater number did most vnworthily and vnthankfully refufe faluation offered them: yet hee compareth that small number of the elect which was mixed amongst the vnbeleeuers, vnto a plentifull haruest, becaufe that God esteemeth more of that small companie of them, then of all the world befide. And though many did then intrude themfelves in: yet he doth not account them amongst labourers; becaufe that few did behaue themfelves faithfully: for hee taketh this name of labourers in the good part. When Paul complayneth of euill workers, he hath refpect vnto their vaine-glory and boasting. For he beftoweth not this title vpon them that apply their labour onely in destroying and wafing: but becaufe that vnder a false pretence they challenge the fame vnto themfelves.

Pray the Lord of the haruest. Becaufe that no sincere or fit minifter of the Gospell will thrust in himfelfe: neyther doe others rightly difcharge the office of teaching, but those which are raifed by the Lord, and are by the fpirit furnished with their giftes, fo oft as wee fee the want of good paffours, it is neceffary that wee fhould lift vp our eyes to him for remedie. But there was neuer more need of this prayer, then in the horrible confufion of the Church, which doeth nowe appeare in euery place.

Mathevv. 8

Marke 4

Luke 8.

23. And when hee was entred into the fhip, his Difciples followed him.

24. And beholde there arofe a great tempeft in the Sea, fo that the fhippe was covered with waues: but hee was a fleeper.

25. Then his difciples came and awoke him: faying, maifter, faue vs, we perifh.

26. And hee fayde vnto them: why are yee fearefull, O yee of little faith? Then hee arofe, and

35. Nowe the fame day when euen was come, he faid vnto them Let vs paffe ouer vnto the other fide.

36. And they left the multitude, and tooke him as hee was in the fhippe, and there were alfo with him other fhips.

37. And there arofe a great ftorme of winde, and the waues dafhed into the fhip, fo that it was full.

38. And he was in the fterne a fleeper on a pillow: and they awoke him, and fayd to him, maifter, careft thou not, that wee perifh?

39. And hee rofe vp, and rebu-

22. And it came to paffe on a certaine day, that hee went into fhip with his difciples: and hee fayde vnto them. Let vs goe ouer vnto the other fide of the lake, & they lanchd forth.

23. And as they fayled, he fell a fleeper, and there came down a ftorme on the lake, and they were filled with water, & were in iopardy.

23. Then they went to him & awoke him faying, maifter, mafter, we perifh. And hee arofe and rebuked the wind and the waues of water, and they ceafed and is

and rebuked the winds
and the sea : and so
there was a greate
calme.

27. And the men
marueiled, saying :
what manne is this,
that both the windes
and the sea obey
him.

ked the windes, and sayde vnto
the sea, peace, and be still. So
the wind ceased, and it was a
great calme.

40. Then he sayd vnto them
why are yee so fearefull : how
is it that yee haue no faith ?

41. And they feared excee-
dingly, and sayd one to another
who is this that both the winds
and the sea obey him.

was calme.

25. Then hee sayde vnto
them, where is your faith ? and
they feared, and wondered a-
mong themselves, saying : who
is this that commaundeth both
the windes and the water, and
they obey him ?

Because that shortly after there is againe mention made of a lake, where-
into it is sayd, the swine were caried headlong : all doe not agree whether it be
one and the same lake. All do confesse that the waters of Genesara were plea-
sant to the taste, and whole some to bee vsed : but Strabo sayeth that the lake of
Gadara was so noysome & pestilent, that the beasts which dranke of it lost their
hooues and their haire. Therefore it is not to be doubted, but that they were
two diuers lakes, and in space farre distant one from another. But without que-
stion this place ought to be vnderstood of Genesara : which Christ passed ouer
and went to the Gadarens, which are called Gergesens by Mathew. And they
which of the diuersitie of the name do gather that two diuerse histories are re-
corded, while they would seeme to be subtil, they slip into too grosse ignorance
For the Country of the Gergesens was also called Gadarena, of a famous City
called Gadaris. The name was changed in Hieromes time, therefore hee cal-
leth them Gerasens, according to the custome then receiued. Yet I do not de-
nie but that the swine were caried headlong by the deuils, into the lake of Ga-
dara. But when Christ sayth, let vs goe to the further shore, I cannot inter-
pret that but of Genesara. Nowe it remaineth that wee shoulde consider the
time, which cannot bee gathered neyther by Matthewe nor by Luke. Onely
Marke noteth that it was the euening of that day when Christ spake of the prea-
ching of the Gospell, vnder the parable of the seeede. Whereby it appeareth
that they did not obserue the order of the time, the which Luke doeth also eu-
dently declare, when hee sayth that it came to passe vpon a certaine day : by
which words he sheweth that hee did not much busie himselfe what was done
first or last.

23. When he was entred into the ship. Marke sayth that other ships did passe
with them also : but that Christ with his disciples went vp into his owne shippe
Luke doth also : che arte his words. Mathew is brieffer, yet in summe they agree
namely, that Christ layd himselfe to rest, and while hee slept, sodenly there a-
rose a tempest. First it is certaine, that the tempest which did trouble the lake,
came not by chance. For how can it be that God would suffer his owne Sonne
to be tolt with the blind force of the windes ? But his will was by this meanes to
reueale to his Apostles how little and how weake their faith was as yet.

And though Christes sleepe was naturall, yet it auayled to the same.

use, that the Disciples should the better know their owne infirmitie. I will not say, as many doe, that Christe fained himselfe to bee a sleepe, that hee might try them: I doe rather iudge that hee slepte as the condition and the necessitie of humane nature did require. Yet his Godhead did watch, so that the Apostles ought not to haue feared but that they shoulde haue presently bin comforted, helpe being prepared for them from heaven. Therefore lette vs know that all this was done by the secret prouidence of God, that Christ slepte, that the storme arose, the waues couered the shippe, and that the shippe hardly escaped drowning. And lette vs learne hereby, so oft as any aduersitie doth arise, that our fayth is tryed of the Lorde: but if the troubles doe encrease, so that they doe almost ouerwhelme vs, it is by the same purpose of God to exercise our patience: or that by this meanes our hidden infirmitie might come to light: as we see, when the waues couered the Apostles, their infirmitie was reuealed, which before was hidde.

25. *Maister saue vs.* A godly prayer, as it seemeth: for what could they haue done better, then being at the poynt to be lost, to seeke for preseruatiō at christ? But sith that Christe condemneth them of infidelitie, wee must seeke wherein they offended. And I doubt not but that they stucke too much to the carnall presence of their maister. For, as it appeareth by MARK E, they doe not simply entreat him, but they expostulate the matter with him: Maister carest thou not that we perish? Luke also noteth an amazed trembling: Maister, maister wee perish. They ought to account that the Godhead of Christe was not oppressed with the sleepe of the flesh, and to haue fledde to the same. But they rest vntill extreme danger enforceth them: then excessive feare amaseth them, so that they thinke they cannot be safe, except they waken Christ. This is the cause why he accuseth them of infidelitie. For in that they required that hee would helpe them, was rather a testimonie of their faith, if they had trusted in his diuine power, and patiently without feare hadde hoped for the helpe which they required. And thus is the question answered, which may be demanded of his reproouing them: whether all feare is naught and repugnant to faith. First he doth not simply reprove them because they feare, but because they bee feareful. Marke also useth such a phrase as noteth that they did feare beyond measure. Then by opposing faith to their feare, he sheweth that he speaketh of excessive feare, which doeth not so much exercise their faith, as shake the rootes offayth out of their mindes. And thereby appeareth that enery feare is not contrary to faith: for if we feare nothing, a rechelesse securitie of the flesh doeth oppresse vs: so faith faunteth, the desire to pray waxeth dull, and the remembrance of God is at length extinguished. Further, they which are not touched with a feeling of euilles, are rather blockish then constant. So we see that feare which stirreth vp faith, is not of it selfe to be condemned vntill it exceede measure. And herein is excesse, if that the tranquillitie of our faith, be therby either troubled or waxe faint, which ought to rest vpon the word of God: but because it neuer falleth out, that the faithfull doe so gouerne themselves that their faith is kept vnshaken, they doe almost alwayes offend in fearing. But it is requisite to determine, not to condemne the shaking of faith for euery feare, but for that feare which disturbeth the peace of conscience, so that it rest not in the promise of God.

26. He rebuked the windes. Matthev rehearseth also the words of Christ, where with he speaketh to the sea, and commaundeth it to be silent, that is, to be calme, nor that the lake had any senses, but that hee might shew that the power of his voyce doth peirce euen into the dumbe elements. And not onely the sea & the windes, creatures without sence, do obey the commandement of God, but the wicked also themselues with all their stubbornesse. For when as God will appease warlike tumults, hee doth not alwayes mollifie the cruell mindes of men, and frame them to obey him, but hee yet causeth their weapens to fall out of their hands, be they neuer so mad. And so is that fulfilled which is written. Psal. 46. 9. He maketh warres to cease vnto the ends of the world: hee breaketh the bow, & cutteth the speare in sunder, and burneth the chariots with fire.

27. And the men maruailed. Marke and Luke seeme to attribute this to the Apostles: for after they had said that Christ had reprobued them, they adde, they cryed out with feare, who is this? yet this is rather to be applied to others, which did not as yet know Christ. But let vs follow both: herein doth now appeare the fruite of the miracle, when the glory of Christ is shewed forth. If any thinke that the Apostles spake it, then this shall be the meaning of the wordes: his diuine power was sufficiently prooued, in that the winds & the sea do obey him. Yet because it is more probable that other spake it, the Euangelistes doe teach in these wordes, that their mindes were so stricken with the miracle, that the reuerence of Christ, was a certaine preparation to sayth.

Matth. 8.

28. And whē he was come to the other side, into the countrey of the Gergesenes, there mette him two possessed with deuilles, which came out of the graues very feirce so that no manne might goe by that way.

29. And beholde they cryed out: saying, Iesus the sonne of God, what haue wee to doe with thee? Art thou come heether to torment vs before the time.

30. Now

Marke 5.

1. And they came ouer to the other side of the sea, into the countrey of the Gadarens.

2. And when he was come out of the shippe, there mette him incontinently out of the graues, a man which had an vnleues spirit.

3. Who had his abiding among the graues, and no man could binde him, no not with chaines.

4. Because that when hee was often bounde with fetters and chaines, hee plucked the chaines asunder, & brake the fetters in peeces, neither could any manne tame him.

5. And alwayes both night & day he cried in the moūtaines, & in the graues, & stroke himselfe with stones. 6. And when he saw Iesus a farre off, he ran and worshipped him. 7. And cryed with a loud voice and sayd what haue I to do with thee Iesus, the sonne of the most high God? I charge thee by God, that thou torment me not.

8. For

Luke 1.

26. So they sailed vnto the regio of the Gadarens, which is ouer against Galile.

27. And as hee went out to land, there met hī a certaine man out of the city, which had a deuill a long time, & hee ware no clothes, neither abod in house, but in the graues.

28. And when he saw Iesus, he cried out, & fel downe before hī. & with a loud voice said: what haue I to do with thee Iesus the son of God the most high: I beseech thee torment me not.

29. But hee commaunded the foule spirit to come out of the man: (for oftentimes he had caught him: therefore hee was bound with chaines, and kept in fetters: but hee brake the bands and was carried of the deuill into wildernes.)

30. Then

30. Now there was a farre off from the great herde of swine feeding.

31. And the deuils besought him saying: If thou cast vs out, suffer vs to goe into the herde of swine.

32. And he sayd vnto them: Goe, so they went out, and departed into the herde of swine: and behold, the whole herde of swine was caried with violence from a sleepe down place into the sea, and died in the water.

33. The herde men fled, & while they were come into the citie, they told al things and what was become of them that were possessed with diuells.

34. And beholde all the citie came out to meete Iesus, and when they sawe him, they besought him to departe out of their coastes,

8. For he sayd vnto him: Come out of the man thou vnclane spirit.

9. And he asked him: What is thy name? and he answered, saying: my name is Legion for wee are many.

10. And they prayed him instantly, that he would not send them away out of the country.

11. Now there were ther in the mountaines a great herde of swine feeding.

12. And all the diuils besought him: saying, send vs into the swine, that wee enter into them.

13. And incontinently Iesus gaue them leaue. Then the vnclane spirits went out and entred into the swine, and the herd ran headlong from the high banks into the sea, (and there were about two thousand swine) and they were drowned in the sea.

14. And the swineherdes fledde and told it in the citie, and in the country, and they came out to see what it was that was done.

15. And they came to Iesus, & saw him that had beene possessed with the deuill, and had the Legion, and in his right minde, and they were afraid.

16. And they that sawe it told them what was done to him that was possessed with the deuill, & concerning the swine.

17. Then they began to pray him that he would depart out of their coasts.

18. And when he was come into the ship, he that had bin possessed with the deuill, praied him that hee might bee with him.

19. Howbeit Iesus would not suffer him, but said vnto him: Goe thy way home to thy freindes, and shewe them what great things the Lord hath done vnto thee, and how he hath had compassion on thee. 20. So he departed, and began to publiß in Decapolis, what great things Iesus had done vnto him: and all men did maruaile,

30. Then Iesus asked him: saying, what is thy name. And hee sayd, Legion, because many deuils were entred into him.

31. And they besought him, that he would not command the to goe out into the deepe. 32. And there was therby, an herd of swine feeding on an hill, & the deuils besought him that he would suffer them to enter into them: so he suffered the. 33. Then went the deuils out of the man, & entred into the swine: and the herd was caried with violence from a sleepe down place, into the lake, & was choked. 34. When the herdmen saw what was don, they fled. & when they were departed, they told it in the city and in the country. 35. The they came out to see what was done, and came to Iesus, & found the man out of who the deuils were departed, sitting at the feete of Iesus, clothed, and in his right mind. and they were afraid. 36. They also which saw it, told the by what mean he that was possessed with the deuill, was healed. 37. Then the whole multitude of the country about the Gadarenes, besought him, that he would depart from them, for they were taken with a great feare, & he went into the ship and returned. 38. Then the man, out of who the deuils were departed, besought him that he might be with him: but Iesus sent him away, saying. 39. Returne into thine owne house, and shewe what great things God hath done vnto thee. So hee went his way, and preached throughout all the city what great things Iesus had done vnto him.

I haue before confuted their error which thinke that Marke and Luke doe report not this, but an other miracle. For when as the three Euangelists do note that region which is against Galile, as Luke also declareth, and all the circumstances doe agree: who will beleue that all these things fell out at diuers times

28. *There met him two possessed with deuils.* This difference caused the interpreters to erre, and to separate Mathewe from the other two: because hee nameth two, and the other but one. But Augustines coniecture is probable, who thinketh that there were two, yet they made mention but of one, because hee was the more famous: and so the miracle should be the more notable in him by reason of the greatnesse of the disease. And certainly wee see that Marke & Luke do bestow moe words in amplifying the crueltie of the deuill, that it might appeare that the miserable man of whom they speake, was wonderfully tormented. Therefore in that they report a notable example of the diuine power of Christ though they say nothing of the other man, yet they dissent not from the history of Mathew, which addeth the hystorie of the other who was so well knowne. That Luke sayth, a certaine man met him out of the citie, it is vncertaine whether he meaneth that he was a citizen of Gadara, or whether he came out from thence to meete him. For when as he was commanded to goe home, and to preach the grace of God amongst his owne freinds, Marke sayeth that hee did this in Decapolis, which was a countrie next ouer against Galile, whereby it is to be coniectured that he was not a Gadaranite borne. Further, Mathewe and Marke doe expressly say that hee came not out of the Citie, but out of the graues. And Luke himselfe in the whole course of the hystorie, declareth that hee liued in the desert. Therefore these wordes (*A certaine man met him out of the citie*) I doe thus interpret, before Christ came to the Citie, a certaine man possessed with a deuill, met him by the way out of that coast. But their opinion which thinke that he dwelt in the graues, either because the deuils were delighted with the saueur of the dead carcases, or that they were pleased with the sight of the sacrifices, or because they would catch the soules which desired to be neare vnto their bodies, is friuolous and foolish. The vncleane spirit did rather hold this man amongst the graues, that he might be consumed with continuall terror, by the sorrowfull beholding of the dead, as one banished from the company of men, would dwell amongst the dead. Further, wee learne hereby that the deuill doth not onely vex men in this present life, but persecute them euen vnto death, so that his kingdome might flourish euen in death.

MARKE. 3. *And no man could binde him, no not with chaines.* Hee could not naturally breake chaines, whereby wee gather that Sathan is permitted to haue sometime extraordinarie motions, whose force exceedeth our vnderstanding and vsuall reason. And it is often seene that frantike men haue much more strength, then if they were in perfect health. And it is not to be denied but that the deuill doeth there also play his partes, so oft as God doeth suffer him, but this violent force which the Euangelistes do here speake of, was farre greater. Truly a sorrowfull & a horrible spectacle, but wee are thereby admonished how miserable and fearefull a thing it is, to be subiect to the tyranny of Sathan: and wee must much more feare the vexation of the soule

oule then the tormentis of the bodie, how sharpe or cruel soeuer they bee.

6. *Hee worshipped him.* This was the order of the history, when the possessed with deuilles mette him, Christe commaunded the vnclane spirites to come out of them, then did they humbly beseech him that he woulde not torment them before the time. Therefore hee did not worshippinge Christ, before Christ spake to them: neither did they complaine that Christe troubled them, vntill he commaunded them to go forth. But it is to be noted that they came not willingly into Christes sight, but drawne by the secret power: for as they were wont before by their furious fiercenesse to draw men into the graues: so now a greater power bringeth the against their will to the tribunal seat of their iudge, whereby we gather that all the kingdome of Sathan is subiect to the power of Christ. For the deuils haue not now any more their owne desire, when Christe citeth them before him, then the miserable manne had before, which by his tyrannie were carried hither and thither. To be short by the secret power of Christ they are brought before him, that by casting them out, he might declare himselfe to be the deliuerer of men. Also by compulsion they worshippinge him, and their reprochfull complaints doe testifie that their confession was not voluntary but wrested out by violence, they say: *What hast thou to doe with vs?* By which woordes they desired to drive him away: but because they sawe themselves holden fast bound, so that it were vaine to flee from his power, they complaine that they are tormented before the time, and with it they ioyne an intreatie. So wee see the deuilles doe nothing but breath our crueltie againste God, and yet with their pride wherein they swell, they fall downe as confounded creatures, and that at the same present: because their malice and perversnesse, which is neuer tamed, ceaseth not to wrastle against the power of God, and yet in the meane season it is enforced to giue place.

This seemeth to be the cause why Christe doeth not openly reiecte here the confession of the deuill, as he did in other places: because it was euident that he could not do such harme in that place. Note that Christ had a consideration of men, and for that cause, when malicious and wicked menne were by, that hee might the readilier stop false reportes and slaunders, hee did the more sharply put the deuils to silence. As concerning this place it is inough, and more then inough, that the deuils humbly entreating, did outrageously fret against him.

MATH. 29. *Art thou come hither to torment vs before the time.* Some interpret this to bee the kinde of torment, that they are enforced to leaue that manne which they possessed, free, and at libertie. Other refferre it to the last day of iudgement. But I vnderstand that they being amazed at the presence of their iudge, did thinke of their punishment, for an euill conscience telleth them what they haue deserued though Christe holde his peace. For euen as the wicked being at the iudgement seate, doe conceiue their punishment: so of necessity must the deuils and all wicked men tremble at the sight of God: euen as if they did now feelee the helles, the fire vnquenchable, & the tormentes to come. And when the deuils knew that Christ should bee the iudge of the world, it is no mauell if his sight stricke a feare into the of present torment. The questiō is in vaine which some do moue, whether they knew of the day of iudgement. Then

what doeth this clause meane, *Before the time?* namely, because thereprobare doe neuer thinke it time for them to bee punished: for they doe gladly delay it from day to day. For as they account delay for gaine, so long as the Lorde doeth beare with them: so (though to no purpose) by running backe they flee his iudgement.

MAR 9. *My name is Legion.* Christ asked this question of the deuill, that hee might the better st. forth the excellencie of his grace. This man had not so great a vengeance laide vpon him without a cause, that as it were an hoast of deuils shoulde dwell in him. Then, what great mercy were it to drawe this man out of so many destructions, which was lost more then a thousand times? Also the power of Christe did shine herein wonderfully, that at his voyce hee sodenly put to flight, not one deuill, but a great multitude. And this word *Legion* is not taken for a certaine number of menne, but onely for a great multitude. Heereby it appeareth how miserable a creature man is, whereas hee is without the protection of God: for euery man lyeth open, not only to perticular deuils. but is a receptacle to whole multitudes of deuilles. Heere is also confuted the common error which the Iewes and Christians haue borrowed of prophane men: namely, that perticular men are assaulted by perticular deuilles. But the scripture doth plainly affirm, that the Lord as hee pleaseth, sendeth one deuill to scourge a whole nation, & sometime many to torment one man: so againe sometime one Angell is set ouer a whole people, & to perticular men are many appointed to watch ouer the for their saluatiō. So much the more carefully it behoueth vs to watch, least so great a multitude of enemies do circumsue vs. **10.** *They prayed him instantly,* Luke saith that the entreated that they might not be sent into the deepe: which is so expounded of some as if they fled the desert. But I do refer it to the desire which they had to hurt, because the deuils do only desire this one thing, to wander amongst men, as Lions hūting after their pray. It greuethe the to be drowned in the deepe, wherin their power to hurt & to destroy should be taken away. And it may be gathered by Markes words, that this is the natural sence of this place. For he saith that they required that they might not be compelled to go out of that country. In sum, they declare this to be their nature, that they desire nothing more, then the destruction of mankind.

MAT. 3. *Suffer vs to goe into the heard of swine.* Some thinke that they desired to enter into the swine, because they doe hate deadly all the creatures of God. I graunt that this is true, that they are wholly bent to ouerthrow and peruert the whole order of nature framed by God: but it is certaine that they had a further regard, namely that they might cause the inhabitants of that nation to curse God for the losse of their swine. For the deuill sent lightening vpon Iob his house, not for the hatred of the woode or the stones: but that the holy man, bearing vnpatiently the losse, shoulde murmur against God. And Christ allowing it, doeth not heare their requestes, but for this cause, that he might know what manner of people the Galarens were.

And it may bee thuthee gaue that liberty to the deuilles ouer their swine, that hee might by that meanes punish their offences. But as no certaine cause doeth appeare vnto vs, so it doeth behooue vs reuerently to deeme of the secret iudgement of God, and with godly humilitie to honour the same.

But

But this place doth teach vs how foolishly certaine prophane menne do trifle, which imagine that deuilles are not essentiall spirites, but onely wicked affections. For howe can couetousnesse, ambition, crueltie and infidelitie, enter into swine? Therefore wee knowe the euill spirites (as they are appoynted to destruction) to bee enemies of mankind: to that end, that they may cary as many headlong with them to the same destruction as they can.

M AR. 25. *They came to Iesus.* Wee haue heereby a notable instruction, all which seele the hand of God doe not profit as they ought: that they might thereby submit themselues vnder true holinesse. The Gadarens beholding the myracle, were afraid: namely, because the maiestie of God did shine in Christ. Thus farre they did well: But that they send him out of their coasts, what could they haue done worse then that? They also were scattered: the shepheard is ready, which gathereth together nay, God stretcheth out his armes by his own sonne, that he might cary them (which were ouerwhelmed with the darkenesse of death) in his owne armes into heauen. They had rather loose the saluation offered them, then any longer abide the presence of Christ. They seeme to bee offended at the losse of their swine: but Luke noteth a greater cause, that they were taken with a great feare, and certainly being exasperated by receiuing that losse, they would els not haue required him, but they woulde haue driuen him out more roughly. But when they reuerence him, as a minister of God, and being afraid, doe yet desire to haue him further from them, we see that they were touched with no feeling of the grace of God. And certainly though all the wicked doe reuerence God, and do bestow much time in appeasing him: yet if their choise were giuen them, they would conuay themselues a great way from him: because his face is terrible to them, so long as they thinke him to be a iudge rather then a father. Hereof it cometh to passe, that the doctrine of the Gospell (then the which nothing can bee imagined to bee sweeter) is in diuers places grieuous and sowre, so that a great part of the world would wish it buried. Yet it is true, that part of their feare riseth through their losse: So at this day, while men doe openly and priuately account that the kingdome of Christe is against their comodities, being possessed with a wicked feare of the flesh, they wil not taste of his grace. Therefore at his comming, they, imagine God rather to be angry then mercifull, as much as in them lieth, send him away to an other place. And this is a token of vile blockishnes, that the losse of their hogges doeth more terrifie them, then the saluation of the soule doth make them ioyfull.

L V. 38. *The man besought him.* The gadarens cannot abide him, with them: but the man which was deliuered from the deuill, desireth that he may loose his countrey, and follow him. Herby appeareth how much difference there is betweene the knowledge of the goodnesse, and of the power of God: because the power striking in a feare, maketh men to flye from the sight of God, and driue them farre away: but the goodnes doeth sweetly allure, so that they account nothing more to be desired, then to be vnited to God.

It is vncertaine why Christe refused to haue this manne to followe him, except hee hoped that greater profite shoulde arise by his telling that so excellent and notable a benefit amongst his owne countrey menne. And

Mar. & Lu. do testifie that he did so. Christ purposely comāndeth him to shew forth the worke of God, not his owne: so that he being accounted for a true Prophet and minister of God: and this he doth that he might get credit to his doctrine. For so it was meete by a litle at once to instruct that rude people, which as yet knew not his god-head. And though Christ is the ladder whereby we ascend to God the father: yet, because he was not as yet recaled, he beginneth at the father, vntill he haue a more fitte oportunitie.

Now this doctrine is to be added: Christe in the person of one man sheweth a token of that his grace, which he extendeth to all mankinde. For though we are not tormented of the deuill, yet hee holdeth vs bound vnto him, vntill the sonne of God deliuer vs from his tyranny. We wander naked, rent, and deformed vntill hee restore vs to a sound and a perfect minde. It remaineth that wee testifie our thankfulness in celebrating his grace.

Math. 10.

1. And hee called his twelue disciples vnto him, and gaue them power against vncleane spirits to cast them out, and to heale enery sicknes, and enery disease.

2. Now the names of the twelue Apostles are these: the first is Simon, called Peter, and Andrew his brother: Iames, the son of Zebedeus, and Iohn his brother.

3. Philip and Bartlemew, Thomas and Matthew the Publican: Iames the sonne of Alphesus, and Leb-bens, whose surname was Thaddens.

4. Simon the Cananite, and Iudas the Iscariot, who also betrayed him.

5. These twelue did Iesus send forth, and commaunded them, saying, goe not into the way of the Gentiles, & into the city of the Samaritans enter yee not.

6. But go rather to the lost sheepe of the house of Israel

7. And as yee goe, preach, saying, the kingdome of heauen is at hand.

8. Heale the sicke, cleanse the Leapers, raise vpp the dead, cast out the deuils, freely ye haue receiued, freely giue.

• Marke 6.

7. And hee called the 12. and began to send them two and two and gaue them power ouer vncleane spirits

Luke 9.

1. Then called he the twelue disciples together, and gaue them power & authoritie ouer deuils, & to heale diseases.
2. And hee sent them to preach the kingdome of God, & to cure the sicke.

Heere is described the calling of the Apostles: but not such a calling as you hearde of before, when the Lorde minding to prepare them to their office, chose them into his fellowship: for now they are called to the present execution of the same, They are commaunded to prepare themselves to the worke, commissions are giuen them, and least they should lacke authoritie, they are adorned with the power of the spirit. Therefore firste they were chosen and prepared in hope that they should worke,

now

now Christ telleth them that the houre is come, when they must set their hands to the worke. Yet it is to be noted, that he speaketh not as yet of the perpetuall Apostleship : but onely of a temporall embassage, whereby the mindes of men might be stirred vp and wakened, that they might be the readierto heare Christ. Therefore now they are sent into Iudea, to declare that the time of the promised restitution and saluation is at hand : and afterward Christ ordaineth them to spread the Gospell through all the world. Heere he onely chuseth them as helpers, to prepare that people to come to heare him, where his voyce could not come. After he resigneth vnto them that office of teachinge, which hee executed himselfe. And this is worth the noting, least we should imagine that here were set downe a certaine and a perpetuall law to all the ministers of the word, while the Lord doth giue in charge to the publishers of his doctrine, what he would haue them doe for a short time. The ignorance whereof deceiued many, in somuch that without difference, they would bring and tie all the ministers of the word to this rule.

1. *He called his twelue.* The number of the twelue doth note the reformation that should be of the Church. For as the people came of the twelue Patriarches : so Christ doeth now call the remnantes disperied to the remembrance of their first beginning, that they might conceiue some certaine hope of their restitution. And though the kingdome of God did not so flourish in Iudea, as to finde there remaining a perfect estate of the people : but that nation which was now miserably decayed, deserued through their vnthankefulnesse rather to perish for despising the grace offered : yet this hindered not but that they should be borne againe a newe. And after it came to passe, that God our of Syon sent the scepter of the power of his Sonne further abroad, that floudes might run out of that fountaine, which should plentifully water the foure quarters of the world : Then GOD gathered together his Israell from euery place, that not onely the disperied and torne members should bee knit together into one body, but also such men, as before were altogether strangers from the people of God. Therefore the Lord doeth not in vaine appoint twelue, as patriarches, but doth thereby declare the renewing of the Church. Note further that by this number he admonished the Iewes to what end he came. And because they gaue no place to the grace of God, he begat a new Israell to himselfe.

If thou shouldest behold the first beginning, this might seeme to thee a matter to be laughed at, that Christ doth lay such honorable offices vpon men so obscure, and of no estimation : yet the incredible successe, and the plentifull encrease of the Church doth shew that the Apostles in degree of honour, and in fruitfulness of children are nothing inferiour to the Patriarches, but that they farre exceede them.

Hee gaue them power. Because the Apostles were almost not accounted of amongst men, and the embassage, which Christ committed vnto them was diuine, and because they did excell neyther in wisdom nor eloquence: and that the excellency and newnes of the matter required moe then humane giftes, it was necessary that they should haue some other authoritie.

Therefore Christe giuing them power to worke miracles, furnisheth them

them with ensignes of celestially power, which might get them credite & reuerence amongst the people. And by this is the lawfull vse of miracles gathered. For when Christ ordained them preachers of the Gospell and workers of miracles ioynly together so that the miracles should be nothing els then seales of their doctrine, it is vnlawfull to breake that knot that cannot be vnknit. Wherefore the Papistes are false counterfeites, and doe wickedly depraue the workes of God, by separating the word from the miracles.

2. *First Simon.* The Romanistes doe very fondly gather their supremacie from hence, we doe willingly grant that Simon Peter was the first amongst the Apostles, but no reason doth allow to extend that to the whole world, which was of force amongst a few men. Note further that hee which is first numbered hath not therefore presently Lordship amongst his fellowes, i wee graunt all those things, which they demand of Peter, vntill they proue these wicked and sacrilegious Apostates to be Peters successours, his dignitie shall make nothing for the Romane seate.

5. *In the way of the Gentiles.* Hereby appeareth more euidently that, which I touched euen now, that the office which was layd vpon the Apostles was for no other purpose, but to make the Iewes attentue to heare Christ, by stirring them vp to looke for their saluation at hand. Therefore now he encloseth their voyce within the boundes of Iudea, which he after commandeth to sound euerie where to the furthest coastes of the worlde: the reason is: because hee was sent of the Father, a minister of circumcision, to fulfill the promises made in times past to the fathers, Rom. 15. 8. But GOD had made a speciall couenant with the stocke of Abraham. Therefore CHRIST doth not without cause at the beginning continue the grace of GOD amongst the elect people, vntill the full time came for the further publishing of the same. And after his resurrection he spread forth that blessing, which was secondly promised to all the Gentiles: because that the vayne of the Temple was then rent and the partition wall was pulled downe. Therefore, if this discharge seeme to any to bee too hard, in that Christ alloweth not the Gentiles to bee partakers of the Gospell, let him plead with God, who excluding the rest of the worlde, did make his couenaut onely with the seede of Abraham, of which couenaut this commaundement of Christ doeth depend.

6. *But goe rather to the lost sheepe.* Hee assigneth, as I sayd, the first place to the Iewes, because they were the first borne: and because GOD did then account them onely of his houthold, when the other were strangers. And he calleth them lost sheepe, partly that the Apostles being touched with compassion, might the more readily, and with more willing endeavour helpe them: partly that they might knowe that there was great abundance of worke for them, and yet vnder that figure of that nation Christ teacheth what is the condition of all mankind. The Iewes, which were neere, and in couenant with God and so heires of the eternall life, are yet accounted lost, vntill they recouer saluation in Christ. Therefore what remaineth for vs, which are farre inferiours in honour to them? But hee giueth that name of sheepe also to the reprobate, which were not properly of the stocke of God: because the adoption belon-

belonged to all the people : so otherwhere hee calleth them the children of the kingdome, which for their vnfaithfulness were to bee caste out, *Matthew 8. 12.* In summe, Christe commendeth the Iewes to the Apostles vnder the title of sheepe, that they might bestow their labour vpon them : because none coulde bee accounted as in the flocke of God, but those which were gathered into the sheepfold.

7. *Preach saying.* This is that embassage wherewith I said, Christ would that the mindes of the people shoulde be stirred vppe in hope of the redemption at hand. For the kingdome of heauen, Luke saith, the kingdome of God, in the same sense : namely that the Iewes might know, first, that they were to be restored by the benefit and good worke of God, and not of men : then that their estate should bee happy vnder God their king : thirdly, hee promisseth them not an earthly and a fraile felycitie, but a heauenly and euerlasting.

8. *Heale the sicke.* As hee gaue them power, so hee commaunded them to bee faythfull and liberall disposers of the same : and he commandeth them not to suppress those things, which were layd vppe with them for the common good of all menne. But by these myracles hee declareth for what purpose hee was sent of the father, and what is the ende of his Gospell. Neither is it with out aduise that hee commaundeth them rather to raise the dead, and to heale the sicke, then to afflicte the whole with diseases, or to kille the tharline. Therefore these myracles haue an Analogie and similitude with the office of Christe, that we might knowe that hee came to be the authour of all good things to vs, which shoulde deliuer vs from the tyranny of Sathan and of death, which shoulde heale our sickness and our sinnes, and shoulde helpe all our miseries.

Freely yee haue receiued. That they might the more willingly bestow those gifts, which he had giuen vnto them, he declar. th that they were not bestowed vpon them for their owne priuate glory, but that they might bee as it were certaine conduit pypes for the conuiance of the free goodnesse of God, as if he should haue said, consider from whence you had this power : as it came vnto you by none of your owne deseruing, but of the meere grace of God, so nowe it is meete that by your ministry it should be freely bestowed vpon others.

Wee know how hardly euery man doth part from that to others, which hee thinketh to be peculiar to himselfe : also where some one is lifted vp above the rest of his brethern, how ready he is to despise all other. Therefore hee could not better perswade to a free bestowing of spirital gifts, then by teaching the, that no man excelleth by his owne indutrie, but by the free liberalitie of God. And Christ now sheweth in his ministers a token of that grace, which was foretolde by *Isaias, 55. 1.* All yee that thirst, come yee to the waters, drinke, and take wine and milke without money : yet he also sheweth that no man can bee a sincere minister of his word, and dispenser of his grace, but hee that is ready to bestow his labour freely : & that all hyelinges doe vnworthily corrupt and prophane the holy office of teaching. But this is not against free bestowing, that the teachers of the Church are maintained with publike stipendes, so that they do willinoly & freely serue Christe and the Church : and let their provision for their liuing bee as it were an increase of their labour.

Matth. 10.

Marke 6.

Luke. 9.

9. Possesse not golde nor siluer, nor money in your girdles.

10. Nor a scrippe for the iourney, neither two coates, neither shoes, nor a staffe: for the workman is worthy of his meate.

11. And into whatsoeuer city or towne yee shall come, enquire who is worthy in it, and there abide yee, till yee go thence.

12. And when yee come into an house, salute the same.

13. And if the house be worthy, let your peace come vpon it: but if it be not worthy, let your peace returne to you.

14. And whosoever shall not receiue you, nor heare your words when ye depart out of that house or out of that cittie, shake off the dust of your feete.

15. Truly I saye vnto you, it shall be easier for Sodom and Gomorrhah in the day of Iudgement, then for that cittie.

8. And commaunded them that they shoulde take nothing for their iourney, save a staffe onely: neyther scrip, nor bread, nor money in their girdles.

9. But that they should be shod with sandalles, & that they shoulde not put on two coates.

10. And he said vnto them, wheresoeuer yee shall enter into an house, there abide, till yee depart thence.

11. And whosoever shall not receiue you, nor heare you, when yee depart thence, shake off the dust that is vnder your feete, for a witness vnto them. Verily I say vnto you, it shall bee easier for Sodom or Gomorrhah at the daye of iudgement, then for that city.

3. And hee sayd vnto them, take nothing to your iourney, neyther stauces, nor scrip, neither bread, nor siluer, neithir haue two coates.

4. And whatsoeuer house ye enter into, ther abide, and thence depart.

5. And whosoever will not receiue you, when you go out of that city, shake off the very dust from your feete for a testimony against the.

9. Possesse not. Because the order of their ambassage was such, that Christe would that his Disciples shoulde goe throughout all Iudea in a fewe dayes, and speedily to turne againe to him, he forbiddeth them to cary burdens with them, which shoulde hinder this speede. But some doe thinke very foolishly, that this is prescribed as a perpetual law to the ministers of the word, or the Apostles. A little after doe followe very many sentences, which extend further: but it is certaine that these commandementes of leauinge all letes and hinderances are restrayned to that ambassage, which we sayd was appoynted for a time.

Further, that prohibition in Mathew of golde, siluer, a scrippe, and two coats ought to be read in one sentence, as it appeareth by the other two. Therefore I had rather translate it, cary not with you: because it was the Lordes will simply to forbidde that they should not take any thing with them for prouision for that iourney. At home they might haue scrippes, and shooes, and other coates: but that they might bee the lighter for the iourney, hee commaundeth them to leaue all burdens. Thereunto belongeth that saying of Marke, that they shoulde be shodde with sandalles. They seeme to differ in the rodde or staffe: for

for in Marke a staffe is allowed, in Mathevv and Luke it is denied, But seeing the interpretation of the Hebrew word *shot* is doubtfull amongst the Hebrews though the Euangelistes did write in Greeke, they haue diuersly taken the word *rabbon*. Therefore Mathevv and Luke doe meane staffes, which are a burden to them that beare them: but Marke meaneth a staffe whereon trauallers do ease or rest themselves. And it appeareth that it was the maner of them that traualled to cary a staffe: according to the which vse that was layd, Gen. 22. 10. With my staffe I passed ouer this Iordan. In which words Iacob confesseth that hee came into Syria emptie, and not laden with riches.

10. *For the workman is worthy of his meate.* Christ answereth a doubt: for that condition might seeme to be hard to goe through Iudea, not furnished with any prouision for the iourne. Therefore Christ willett them not to be a rayd offainting for want: because that whither soeuer they should come, they should at least be worthy of their meate.

Hee calleth them labourers, (not that they were like the ordinary ministers, which doe dresse the vineyarde of the Lorde, and which in planting and watering doe apply themselves in husbanding of the same) but onely because they were preachers of a more plentifull and full doctrine. Neyther had they as then enioyned them any other office of teaching, then to make the Iewes giue care to the preaching of the Gospell. Least they should object that they should be defrauded of their due foode, because that no man would acknowledge the for labourers. Christ preuenteth that difficultie also, commanding to enquire, who in euery citie was worthy of that message of saluation. In which words he commaundeth them to enquire whether there bee any godly and honest men, which haue any feare of God & religion in them, of whose aptnes to be taught there may be any hope, that they might especially offer their labour to them. For because it was not lawefull for them longe to tarie in euery place, it was meete that they should beginne there, where there was some preparation.

11. *Tary there vntill.* This declareth also the hast they should make, for if they should in any place haue made any longer tarying, they should haue changed their hoste, least they should charge any one man too much. Therefore, when as Christ commaundeth them to tarie with their host, vntill they go into an other citie, hee declareth that they must make haste, that they should presently runne into an other citie, when they haue preached the Gospell in one.

12. *Salute the same.* Because they could not discern the true worshippers of God from contemners he commaundeth them that at the entrance into euery familie, they should freindly insinuate themselves. For the saluation is a certaine entrance to speech. Now, they were willed to goe to such men as were knowne and reported to seeke after godlinesse. But because that it falleth often out, that they, which haue the greatest fame, doe bewray their owne vngodlinesse, when they shall be thorowly tried, it was meete that this commaundement should be added.

Therefore:

Therefore this is the meaning, try at the first entrance, whether the hoster will gladly heare you: whoſoeuer will gladly imbrace your doctrine, tary with them, that your ſaluation may bee confirmed: if any reſuſe it, depart preſently from them, and as much as you can, pull backe againe, your ſaluation. For the phraſe ſignifieth as much, as if he ſhould haue ſayde, becauſe that through their vnthankfulnes they are vnworthie to enioy that bleſſing of God, which you prayde for them, breake off all communication with them. The name of peace hath relation to the maner of ſaluting, which the Iewes commonly vſed. For ſith peace doth with them ſignifie a prosperous eſtate, they pray for peace to them, whom they deſire to be well and prosperouſly, and whoſe good they wiſh to bee ſafe. I grant that the Apoſtles brought an other kind of peace to men: but theiſight is to ſwift, which draw this place to the free reconcilia- tion of God with men.

14. *Whoſoeuer receiveth you not.* A ſeuere denouncing of vengeance againſt the contemner of the Goſpell: whereby Chriſt would encourage his Diſciples, leaſt the vnthankfulnes of the world ſhoulde hinder them in their office. Hee commandeth his Apoſtles what he would haue them doe, if they fall amongſt contemnners: yet this was his eſpeciall purpoſe, to comfort them in their ſorrow and wearines, if their doctrine were any where reſuſed, leaſt they ſhould faint in the midſt of their courſe. And wee ſee how Paule, 2. Cor. 2. 15. vſing this comfort, doth boldly deſpiſe all contempt of men, doth conſtantly go forward through all lets, and doth glory that he is a ſweete fauour to God, though hee is deadly to them that periſh. But this place teacheth how much the Lord eſteemeth his Goſpell: and certainly, ſith it is an incomparable treaſure, they are too much and vilely vnthankfull, which reſuſe the ſame, being offered vnto them.

Further, when as it is the ſcepter of his kingdome, it cannot be reieſted but with manifeſt reproch to him. *Shake off the duſt.* As the Lord doth here commend the doctrine of the Goſpell, that all men might receiue the ſame with reuerence, and ſtriketh a ſeare vnto the rebellious by this greivous decree of vengeance for them: ſo hee commaundeth his Apoſtles to be the declarers of that vengeance, which he appointeth, which cannot bee, but that they ſhould bee enflamed with a moſte vehement zeale to vtter that doctrine, which they preach. Therefore it is to be noted, that no man can be a fit teacher of the hea- uenly doctrine, but he that is ſo affected; that he is vexed and tormented at the contempt of the ſame. It is probable that the Iewes then vſed to ſhake of the duſt, as a figure of curſing, as if they did it to witnes, that the inhabitants of the place were ſo wicked, that they infected the earth with their contagion. I gather that it was an accuſtomed maner by this, that Chriſt ſpeaketh as of a thing knowne. And this maner of execration doth the more confirme that, which I ſayd before, that God was not more offended with any offence, then with the contempt of his word. Neyther doth he command vs after ſo ſolemne a ſort to deteſt either adulterers, or murderers, or any other wicked perſons.

15. *Truly I ſay vnto you.* Leaſt it ſhoulde ſeeme to bee a vaine ſkarcrow, CHRIST affirmeth that they ſhall bee more greivouſly puniſhed, which conſpaine the Goſpell, then the Sodomiters. That is farre from the mean-
ing

ning of Christ, which some haue, imagining this to be spoken of the destruction of Hierusalem. For wee must vnderstand the day of the generall iudgement, wherein they shall both giue an account, that there may bee a comparison of the punishments. Christ nameth Sodome rather then any other cities, not onely because it excelled all in most haynous sinnes, but because it was consumed of the Lord by a wonderful manner of destruction, that it might be an example to all ages, and that the name it selfe should be abhorred. Yet it is not to bee marueiled, that Christ sayth, that they shall bee more easily dealt with, then the vnfaithfull, which refuse to heare the Gospell. For when men shall denie authoritie to their creator and maker, neyther will vouch safe to heare his voyce, but doe reiect him calling louingly, and will not beleue him, promising all things liberally: this wickednes is as the greatt heape of all sinnes. If that so horrible a punishment doth follow the repulse of so safe or obliure manner of preaching, how terrible a punishment doth nowe remaine for them, which reiect Christ speaking with full mouth?

Further, if God doth so seuerely threaten the contemners, what shall become of those furious enemies, which fight against the Gospell eyther with blasphemies and a venemous tongue, or doe cruelly persecute it with fire and swordes?

Mathew. 10

Marke

Luke 12.

16. Beholde, I sende you as sheepe in the midst of wolues: bee therefore wise as serpents, and innocent as doves.

17. But beware of men: for they will deliuer you vp to the couisels, & will scourge you in the Synagogues.

18. And yee shall be brought to the gouernours and kinges for my sake, in witnesse to them, and to the Gentiles.

19. But when they deliuer you vp, take no thought how or what you shal speake: for it shall be giuen you in that houre what yee shall say.

20. For it is not yee that speake: but the spirit of your father, which speaketh in you.

11. And when they shall bringe you vnto the Synagogues, and vnto the rulers and princes, take no thought how, or what thing yee shall answer, or what yee shall speake.

12 For the holy Ghost shall teache you in the same houre, what yee ought to say.

The commandements, which Mathew heretofore set downe, do onely belong to their former progresse or iournie, which was in few daies to be ended. Now Christ proceedeth further, and he armeth them against the time to come that they might knowe that they were chosen to declare that messenger or or a short time, but that there remained for them a matter of greater weight, and of much more trauaile. For though they were not presētly brought forth to these broyles, wherof Christ speaketh: yet it was profitable for them to be warned before hand, that if they shuld abide any troubles, they might know, that these were but certaine preparations of a more harder warfar, wherunto they were prepared.

prepared. This was also true in the first ambassage, that the Apostles were like to sheepe amongst woolues. but the Lord sparing their infirmities, helde backe the seueritie of the woolues, that they should not hurt, peculiarly referring it to that time, which the Lord had appoynted to handle the more straightly. For they were vsed as marriage guesstes, the Bridegroom being with them before the resurrection: but after the Bridegroom departed from them that tendernes and ease ceased, and their estate was then so hard, that they should then vnderstand, that they were not in wayne furnished before hand with these defences. Also it may be, that these wordes, which were spoken at diuerse tymes, were here by Mathew gathered into one place: for Luke, as we shal see after, reporteth that the same wordes were spoken to the seuentie Disciples, which were putte in the place of the Apostles.

But this is out of question, that they were not by these wordes fore tolde what successe they should haue of this journey: which they nowe entred into, but that they were forwarned of the whole course of theyr apostleship.

16. *Behold I sende you.* The exhortation which presently folloiweth dooth shewe evidently whereto this admonition tendeth. Therefore the text ought thus to be resolued, you haue neede of wisdom and simplicity: because you shall be as sheepe amongst woolues. But the reason is gathered of the necessitie: because except they doe wisely looke to themselves, they should be presently deuoured of woolues, but if they were afraid of the madnesse of the woolues, or were not carefull, that they should not wauer, and so at length fall from their office. Wee will first declare what this meaneth, that they should be sent as sheepe amongst woolues. Although men are cruell and bloudie, the Lord could mitigate their crueltie, who tamereth and maketh gentle the wilde sauage beastes so oft as he pleaseth. The Lord doth not bring a great company into the obedience of his Gospell, but leaueth them in the fiercenesse of their wit, hee doth it of purpose that hee might exercise his ministers. And though all are woolues by nature, whom G O D doeth not regenerate with the spirit of meekenesse: yet Christ doth especially note the raging enemies of the Gospell, which hearing the shepherdes voyce, are not tamed, but are enflamed with greater crueltie. Therefore the Lorde sendeth forth the ministers of his worde on this condition, that they should liue amongst woolues: that is, that they shoulde haue many deadly enemies, and shoulde bee compassed about with many dangers on euery side, so that they shoulde hardly execute their office amongst so many lettes. And that their tryall might be the sharper, he giueth them no weapons wherewith they should violently defende themselves: but casteth them vnarmed and naked to the teeth of the woolues. For in that hee compareth them to sheepe, is not referred to gentle and quiet manners, or to the lenitie of the minde: but hee onely declareth that they are nothing stronger, or more able to resist the violence of the enemies, then are the sheepe against the madnes of the woolues.

Christ also requireth of his Disciples that they shoulde haue mindes as sheepe, that they might strue with patience against the malice of the wicked, and shoulde receiue injuries quietly: but the simple meaning

of this place is, that the Apostles had many enemies mighty and cruell, prepared against them, when as they themselves should be without all defence. If any man except that this Antithesis cannot after this sort stand between the sheepe and the wolues, the answer is ready. For though the Lorde by calling the enemies of the Gospell wolues, doth rather note their power then their delight to huite: Yet because no man is knowne for a wolfe, except hee waxe mad against the Gospell: therefore hee ioyneth these two together, that they are caried with a desire to suck bloud, and also that they haue power to performe the same.

Bee ye therefore wise. The meaning is, that the wisdom in taking heede should be tempered, that they should not be more fearefull then becometh them, and so become more negligent in their office. For wee see them which would be accounted circumspecte and providente, to become very tymorous and slouthfull. It is meete for the disciples of Christ to be circumspect to take heede, seeing that daungers do hang ouer them euery where. But because the greatest daunger is, least they should through slouth waxe negligent, hee commaundeth them sincerely to go forwarde whether soeuer their calling shall carry them. And this hee declareth by two similitudes, when serpentes perceiue that they are hated, they doe diligently auoyde and flye from whatsoeuer is noysome to them: so the faythfull are commaunded to haue care of their life, least they lespe into daunger, and throwe themselves into all perilles. But the Doves on the contrary parte, though they be fearefull by nature, and are subiect to innumerable daungers, do waite as careless creatures while they are stricken, and commonly they cast themselves into the snares of the takers. To this simplicitie doth Christe exhort his Disciples, least too much fearefulness should hinder them in performing their course. There are some, which, as Philosophers, will more subtilly argue here of the nature of the Serpente and of the Dove: but the similitude reacheth no further. Therefore wee see that carnall wisdom, or rather craftinesse condemned by Christe, wherein a great multitude of menne flatter themselves more then is meete, while they looke hether and thither about them so far as they can go. So while they will not cast themselves into daunger, they renounce Christ that callt them.

17. *Beware of men.* Erasmus addeth them: because he thought that the article had the force of a pronoun demonstratiue. But in my iudgement it is better to take it indefinitely: as if Christe should haue sayde, you must walke wickly amongst menne, where all things are full of deceits and daungers. But he seemeth to fight against himselfe: for this were the best way of taking heede, to do their owne business at home, and not to send them forth abroad. I answer, he noteth here an other kinde of heedfulness, not that they should leave their office for feare, but that they should not be troubled beyond measure with sordaine mischiefs. For we know that they which are assaulted in nauies, doe become as people halfe dead.

Therefore Christe commaundeth his to looke before what shall followe, that they might in time prepare their mindes to beare contumelies.

To be short, he foundeth an alarum to them, that they may the speedilyer prepare themselves to battell. For as too little forecalt, & too much doubtfulnesse doth weaken many: so carelesse securitie doeth make many drunken, that they running on vnadvisedly, doe faint at the most neede. *For they will deliuer you vp to the counsellors.* Wee may easily gather by these wordes, that the contentions, which Christ now speaketh of to his Apostles ought not to be tyed to their first iourney, wherein they found no such thing. But this is the purpose of his forewarning, that they shoulde not at any time be dismayed: for it was a poynt of singular vertue, that poore men should be of a bolde courage: when they shoulde come before Princes, and not be amazed at any glistering shewe of the worlde. He admonisheth them also that they shall not haue contentions in Iudea only, but in places further distant, not onely that they might prepare themselves by long meditation for that warfare, but that being confirmed with their masters wordes, they should not doubt but that they were gouerned by the heavenly prouidence. That which is added *for a witnesse to them and to the Gentiles*, hath his meaning, the will of God is to bee declared also to strange Princes and to nations that be a farre off, that they may bee inexcusable: whereby it followeth that the Apostles shall not lose their labour: for euen where men shall be convicted for contumacy, the iudgement of God shall be shewed.

19. *Bee not carefull.* This is added for a comfort: for Christe should haue exhorted his disciples a hundred times in vaine, if hee hadde not also promised them that G O D would bee present, and that through his power they shoulde certainly bee conquerors. Heereby wee gather, that it was not the purpose of Christ in vttering these daungers, to diminish their zeale: whereby it was necessary that they should be the more enflamed, if they would execute their office rightly.

It is a great thing to come before Princes, for not onely feare, but euen shamefastnesse also doth amaze the mindes of good menne. Then what if Princes shoulde breake out, and almost runne with deadly anger? yet Christ forbiddeth his to bee carefull: because the Spirit shall teach them what to say. For the more a manne knowing his owne weakenesse, distrusteth himselfe, so much the more hee feareth, except hee haue helpe from an other place. And wee see many which doe therefore faint, because they measure the successe of these thinges, which they take in hand to doe by their owne forces, which are very small, or none at all. Therefore Christ forbiddeth his disciples to looke what they can doe, and commaundeth them onely to depend and trust to the heavenly grace.

The question is not (here sayth hee) of your abilitie, but of the power of the holy Ghost, who frameth & directeth the tongues of the faithfull to a pure confession of sayth. And least they shoulde feare a present want, hee declareth they shall haue helpe sent them euen in the very moment. For the Lord doth make the faithfull voyd of the gife of vtterance, so long as he requireth no witnesse of them, and where necessity shall require it, hee maketh them very eloquent, which seemed before to bee tongue tyed. So in our time wee haue seene certaine inayres, which beeing almost brutish, after they

were called to make confession of their faith, they excelled wonderfully with the gift of speaking aptly and learnedly. Further, Christ would not that the Apottles should be without all feare: for it was profitable for them to be carefull to sue by prayers, that the holy Ghost might be giuen them, but he would that they should cast away that carefull meditation, wherewith men did much hinder themselves. For while they inquire with themselves what shall come to passe if this or that should fall out, they are vexed with miserable disquietnesse, and doe not rest vpon the prouidence of God. And whosoever will not giue this honor to the prouidence of God, that it is able in due time to supply their want such certainly are worthy to be tormented.

Mathew. 10.

21. And the brother shall betray the brother to death, and the father the sonne, and the children shall rise against their parents, and shall cause them to die.

12. And yee shall be hated of all men for my names sake: but he that endureth to the end he shall be saved.

22. And when they persecute you in this citie, flee into another: for verely I say vnto you, yee shall not finish all the cities of Israel, till the sonne of man bee come.

24. The disciple is not above his maister, nor the servant above his Lord.

25. It is enough for the disciple to be as his master is; and the servant as his Lord. If they haue called the maister of the house Beelzebub, how much more them of the household?

Marke.

Luke. 6.

40. The disciple is not above his maister: but whosoever will be a perfecte disciple, shall be as his maister.

21. And the brother shall betray. First, he admonisheth them how greiuous troubles doe remaine for them: then hee mitigateth all the sharpnesse by adding a notable consolation. First, he declareth that these things, which were wont to bee a defence, or to bring some ease, should bring an increase of greater miserie to his disciples: for the brethren, which ought to helpe the oppressed, to reach the hande to them that are in calamitie, and to prouide for their safegard, should become their deadly enemies. Yet they are deceiued, which thinke that this doth befall onely to the faithfull, to bee deliuered to death by their brethren. For it may bee, that the Father may persecute the sonne of a godly zeale, if hee see him to bee an Apostate from the sincere worship of God. And in this behalfe the Lord commandeth vs to bee forgetfull of fleshe and bloud, and apply all our endeouour to the maintenance of the glory of his name. Neyther doth euery man spare his kinsfolkes where the feare and religion of God doth flourish: but he had rather they should all perish, if neede so required, then to haue the kingdome of Christ shaken, the doctrine of saluation extinguished, and the worship of God abolished. If our affections were ordered a right, this should be the onely cause of right hatred. But when Christ would establish the kingdome of God, and restore godlinesse into his perfect

fect strength, but woulde also call men backe, from destruction to saluation: there is nothing more vnworthy then for that cause to hate the ministers of so comfortable a doctrine. This, as it is a monstrous thing against nature, might haue much troubled their simple mindes: yet Christ foretellet that so it shall come to passe.

22. *Hee that endureth.* This one promise is sufficient enough to stay the mindes of the godly, although all the world should rise against them, while hee promisseth them a happy and a blessed end. For if the assurance of their purpose doth cary them to death, which fight vnder earthly captaines, being vncertaine of the end of the warre, shall men then doubt to imploy themselves to follow Christ to the end, which are certaine of the victorie?

23. *And when they persecute you in this citie.* He preuenteth that, which they might haue excepted. If the haireds of the whole worlde were to bee borne, what end then at the length? Though therefore they could be in safetie in no place: yet Christe admonisheth them not to despayre: but where they are throwne out of one place, they should rather attempt whether they may profit any thing by their labour in an other place. And the interpreters are deceiued, while they thinke this to be a naked permission. when Christ rather commandeth his disciples what hee would haue them to doe. For he that hath abiden one persecution, would gladly take his ease as a souldiour that hath done his dutie. But Christ alloweth not such a vacation to his, but willet them to run the whole course with an vnwearied minde. In summe, the Apostles are commanded to offer themselves to new skirmishes, least they should thinke that they had done their dutie, when they had passed ouer one or two. Neither doth hee suffer them to fle into corners, where they might lie ydly. But though their labour tooke not good successe in one place, the Lord doeth exhort them to goe forward. But vnder the commandement is also containd a permission. And the flying of persecution is thus to be vnderstoode. For all that flye are not generally to be condemned, neither yet is every flight lawfull. The heate of some of the old writers was too great in this matter, which condemned flight, as if it were a kinde of deniall. For if this were true, some part of the ignominy should redound to Christ and his Apostles. Againe, if it were lawfull generally to fly, there should be in the time of persecution no difference betweene the good pastor and the hyreling. Therefore that moderation is to bee noted, whiche Augustine prescribeth to Honoratus, least any man fearefully forsaking his standing, should cytherraittiously forsake his flocke, or geue an example of slouthfulness: and yet that no man should vnadvisedly thrust in himselfe headlong. Ifeether the whole Church bee assayed, or that part bee followed to death, the pastor shall doe ill, if hee withdraw himselfe, whose duetie it were to oppose his life for every particular man of his flocke: but it may bee sometime that his absence shall be beneficiall to the Church, by appeasing the furie of the enemies. Therefore let in such a case, the simplicitie of the Dove preuaile, least nice men make a cloake for their fearefulness, as flesh is alwayes too wise in auoyding of troubles. For verely I say vnto you. That is not likely that some do vnderstand it of their first sending forth: but it rather comprehendeth the whole Apostleshippe. But herein consisteth the difficultie, what the com-
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ming of the Sonne of manne shoulde signifie. Some menne expounde it, that the Gospell shoulde haue such passage, that all menne should know that Christ should raigne truely, and that the restitution of the kingdome of Dauid should bee hoped for of him. Other doe referre it to the destruction of Ierusalem, wherein Chritte appeareth as a reuenger of vnthankfulnesse. The first exposition is tollerable, the latter is more wrested: yet I do iudge that to be a comfort giuen peculiarly to the Apostles, Christ is sayd to come when he bringeth remedy to things in despayre.

The ambassage, which they were to vndertake, was wonderfull, that they should spread the doctrine of the Gospel throughout the whole world. Therefore Christ promiseth that he himselfe wil come before they shal passe through all Iudea: namely, because he will beautifie his kingdome, by the power of his spirite, that that glory and maiestie shoulde verily shine in the Apostles, which as yet was hid from them.

24. *The Disciple is not above his maister.* Now hee exhorteth them to patience by his owne example. And certainly this comfort is such, as swalloweth vpp all sorrow, while wee consider that our lot is common to vs with the Sonne of GOD: yet that hee might make vs the more ashamed thereby, he taketh two similitudes from the custome of menne. The Disciple accounteth himselfe honoured, to be made equal with his maister: and dares desire no greater honour. Then, that condition, which the Lords do beare patiently, the seruantes doe not refuse to beare the same. Sith the Sonne of God is both these wayes aboue vs, as hee to whome the chiefe authoritie is giuen of the father, and hath the office of a maister committed vnto him: let vs bee ashamed to flye from that, which hee himselfe disdained not to take vppon him for our cause. But these thinges doe rather neede meditation, then exposition: because they are euident enough of themselves. Luke reporteth this sentence in his sixth chapter, not depending vppon the text: but vttered abruptly amongst other wordes. And because Matthewe doeth in this place declare very well to what purpose it appertaineth, I thought that I coulde not place it better any other where. But in the translation I followed neyther Erasimus, nor the olde interpreter, for this cause. The Greeke Participle doeth signifie as well a thing made perfecte, as apt, like, or meete. Further, sith Chritte speaketh heere of a lykenesse, and not a perfection, the latter sense seemeth to bee the better, as if hee shoulde haue sayde, there is nothing more meete nor conuenient, then that the disciple should frame himselfe after the example of his maister.

25. *If they haue called the maister of the house.* It is as much as if hee shoulde haue called himselfe the Lord of the Church: as the Apostle to the Hebrewes 3.2. comparing him to Moses and the Prophets, saith, that they were seruants: but that he was the sonne and heire. For though he vouchsafeth vs the honour of brethren: yet he is the first borne and the head of all the body: to bee short, he hath the chiefe gouernement & power in his hand. Wherefore there is nothing more absurd then to desire to bee accounted amongst the number of the saythfull, and yet to grudge at God when he frameth vs to the image of his own Sonne, whom he hath set ouer his whole householde.

For what nice fancies are these, if we would possesse a place in his house, & exel aboute the Lord himselfe? The meaning is, we are too soft & dainty, if it be hard for vs to beare the reproaches, which our Prince did willingly submit himselfe vnto. The word Beelzebub is corrupted: it should properly be called Bialzebub. So they called the chiefe of the feigned Gods of the Philistins, which the citie Accaron did worship. And the lesser gods were called Baalim, which at this day in popery are called Patrons. And whereas Baalzebub signifieth a Patrone of a flye, or of flyes: some thinke that the name was deriued & taken of this, that the temple swarmed with aboundance of flyes, through the plenty of the sacrifices. But I doe rather coniecture that they sought helpe at the idoll against the flyes, which were noysome to the place. For whē Ochozias superstitiously sought an answer of his health frō it, he called it so. Whereby it appeareth that it was not a name in skorne. For as godly men trāslated the word *Ghennaz*, to the hels, that they might note that place with infamy: so for hatred & detestatiō of the Idoll, they called the deuill Baalzebub. whereby we gather that the reprobate, that they might make churill the more detestable, noted him with the greatest infamy they could, as by calling him a deuill, who should bee the greatest enemy of religion. Wherefore, if it befall vs to be touched with the same ignominy, it ought not to seeme strāge to vs, to haue that fulfilled in the mēbers, which began in y head.

Mat. 10.

Marke. 4.

Luke 8.

26. Feare them not therefore: for there is nothing couered, that shal not be disclosed, nor hid, that shal not be knowne.

27. What I tell you in darke- nesse, that speake yee in the light: and what yee heare in the eare, that preach yee on the houses.

28. And feare ye not them which kill the body, but are not able to kill the soule: but rather feare him, which is able to destroy both soule and body in hell.

29. Are not two sparowes solde for a farthing, and one of them shal not fall on the ground, without your father?

30. Yea, and all the haire of your head are numbred.

31. Feare yee not therefore, yee are of more value then many sparowes.

22. For there is nothing hid, that shal not be opened,

neither is ther a secret, but that it shal come to light

23. If anye manne haue eares to heare, let him heare,

17. For nothing is secret, that shal not be euident, neither any thing hid, that shal not be knowne & come to light.

Luke. 12.

2. For there is nothing couered, that shal not be reuealed, neither hid, that shal not be knowne. 3. Wherefore what so- euer ye haue spoken in darknesse, it shal be heard in the light: & which yee haue spoken in the eare, in secret places, shal bee preached on the houses.

4. And I say vnto you, my friendes be not a frayde of them that kill the body, & after that are not able to do any more

5. But I will forewarne you, whome yee shall feare: feare him, which after hee hath killed, hath power to cast into hell, yea, I say vnto you him feare.

6. Are not fise sparowes bought for two farthings, and yet not one of them is forgotten before God.

7. Yea, and all the haire of your head are numbred: feare not therefore, yee are more of value then many sparowes.

26. *Fear them not therefore.* When as the Apostles should see the Gospel to be so contemptible, and that they should remember the fewnes of the beleevers, they might also cast off all hope for the time to come. Now Christe answereth this doubt, declaring that the Gospel should be spread further, and that it shall passe through all the lettes of menne, so that at length it shall shine forth openly. For though this saying seeme to bee a proverbe, there is nothing conquered, that shall not bee disclosed: yet here it ought especially to bee restrained to the doctrine of salvation, which Christ sayth, shall bee the conquerour what soeuer men deuise to oppresse the same. Though he preached sometime openly in the Temple: yet because his doctrine was refused, hee yet lay hid as it were in darke corners, but hee sayeth that the time shall come when it shall be vttered abroad, which wee know was done shortly after: for there was neuer any sound of thunder more heard in any quarter of the world, then the voyce of the Gospel which sounded throughout the whole worlde. And because this promise ought to comfort their mindes, Christ exhorteth the that they should boldly and valiantly apply themselves to the same, and that they should not be affrayd though they saw the Gospel as yet not regarded, but that they should be crying preachers of the same. That which I reported out of Marke, was spoken peradventure at another time, and in an other sense: yet because there are read short sentences, I follow that which was most probable to me. For after that Christ commanded there his disciples, that as burning lights they should giue a cleare light farre from them, presently after he addeth, there is nothing hid which shall not bee made open. And the light of the Gospel was lighted by the Apostles in darke places, so that by their ministry it shone aloft through the whole worlde. And the text in the eight after Luke is altogether like this. As concerning the place of the 12. chapter, it is not to bee doubted but that it answereth to this, yet in words there is some difference: for Christ commandeth there, that the Apostles should bring those things into light, which they had spoken in the darke: whereby hee declareth that they had as yet but whispred of the Gospel, but that the message which they did beare, was so notable that it should spread it selfe to the furthest partes of the world.

28. *And feare ye not them.* Christe teacheth his disciples to contemne death by a most notable reason, because that menne created to enioy the celestiall immortalitie ought to despise this fraile and transitorie life. For the summe tendeth to this purpose, it the saythfull would consider wherefore they were borne, and what their condition is, there is no cause why they should so greedily desire this earthly life. Though the sence of the woordes are more full and more plentifull, for Christe teacheth that the feare of God is vterly dead in them, which for feare of tyrantes doe fall from the confession of their sayth, and that there reigneth a beastly blockishnesse in their heartes, which for feare of death doubt not to forsake the same confession of faith. For the Antithesis betwene the two contrary feares, is to be noted. If the feare of God be choaked with the feare of men, doth it not appeare that we yeeld more to them then to God himselfe? Now hereof it followeth that the heavenly and eternall life being reiected, we cause that this only remaineth for vs, that wee become like to beasts. The power of eternal life and death is in the hand of God

alone: him wee neglect because the feare of men doth carie vs away. Doth it not euidently appeare that the shadowish life of the body is more esteemed of vs, then the eternall state of the soule? nay, the celestiall kingdome of God is nothing set by of vs, in respect of the fleeing and vanishing shadowe of this present life. Therefore the wordes of Christ ought thus to be resolved: Knowe that you haue giuen you inimmortall soules which are subiect to the will of God alone, they come not into the power of men. And so your faith ought not to yeeld to no terrors or threatnings of men. For how commeth it to passe, that in your vexation the feare of men should preuaile, but because the body is preferred before the soule, and immortalitie is lesse esteemed of, then this transitorie life. Therefore in Luke there is an emphaticall repetition. *Certainely I say vnto you, feare him.* As if Christ should haue said, we haue no respect of God, so oft as wee giue place to the feare of men: contrariwise if we reuerence God, the victory is easily in our owne hands, so that no force of men should draw vs from our duty. Also the experience of all times teacheth vs how necessary this exhortatiō of Christ was to the ministers, & generally to all the godly. For there was neuer time wherein men haue not violently lift vp themselves against God, & haue endeouored to ouerwhelme the gospel. All are not armed with like power to caute & strike a feare of death: but in the greater nūber that monstrous crueltie doth raigne, which when occasion serueth, sheweth it selfe. Also Sathan doth oft suborne the giants, at whose sight the seruants of Christ do fall downe dead, except they be armed with this doctrine, to bee constant without shaking. But when as these two clauses doe ioyne together in one sentence, (some that are vnlearned, do naughtily take this part frō the other, that men are not to be feared. For Christ (as was now said) opposeth the godly & holy feare of God, as a remedy against the peruerse feare of men, which draweth vs out of the right way. Otherwise the consequence doth not follow, if we feare God who is Lorde of body & soule, men are not to be feared, whose power reacheth not beyond the body. And that Christ attributeth to men a power of killing, is spoken by a kind of graūting. So God slacketh the bridles to the wicked, that they being puffed vp with the trust of their owne power dare do any thing, & they do also amaze the minds of the simple, as if they could do euery thing. Therefore the wicked doe triumph in vaine, as if the life of the godly were subiect to their pleasure, & God holdeth the bound, so that he restraineth their crueltie & violent forces, as oft as he pleaseth. yet by this permission they are accounted able to kill: because he often suffereth their sinne weakely to creepe. Lastly, the sermon of christ consisteth of 2. parts: nor that we might learne patiēty to beare the losse of this bodily life, he doth call vs first to the beholding of the eternal life & death. Thē by degrees he descendeth hither also, that the keeping of our life is in the hād of god.

29. *Are not 2. sparowes.* Christ proceedeth further, as I said euen now, though the tyrants become mad, yet they haue not any power ouer the body: therefore they do wickedly which feare the cruelty of men, as if they were not in the custodie of god. Therefore in dangers let vs remēber this secōd comfort, sith god is the keeper of our life, we may safely rest our selues in his prouidēce. nay he is iniured if we cōmit not our life to him, wherof he vouchsafeth to take the charge. But he extendeth the prouidence of god generally to al creatures, that frō the greatest to the

the least he might shew that we are preferred by his defence. There is almost nothing lesse esteemed then sparowes (for two were then solde for a fathing: or as Luke sayth, five for two fathings) and yet the eye of God is watchfull to defend them also, so that nothing can come by chance vnto them. Will he neglect the life of men, who is carefull for sparowes? But two things are heere to bee noted: for first Christ doth define the prouidence of God farre otherwise then many doe, which are not much vnlike to the Philosphers: which though they say that the world is gouerned of God, yet they imagine a confuse prouidence, as if God regarded not particular creatures. But Christ distinctly affirmeth that euery one of the creatures are vnder the hand and custodie of God, so that nothing is left to fortune. For certainly the will of God is opposite to chance: neither yet by this meanes is the *Fatum* of the Stoyckes established: for it is one thing to imagine a necessitie wrapped or tied fast to the manifold course of causes, and an other thing to make all the world and all the partes of the same subiect to the will of God. I grant that there is a chance in the very nature of things: but I say that nothing can fall in the blinde wheele of Fortune, where the will of God doth gouerne. Secondly it is to be noted, that the prouidence of God is to be considered, not as curious and vaine men doe vse, but that it may bee a helpe to our faith, and may stirre vs vp to call vpon God. For he doth not there fore teach that all the haies of our head are numbred, that hee might nourish the vaine speculations, but that wee might learne to depende of the fatherly care of God which he hath for this fraile flesh.

31. *Ye are of more value.* This is generally true of all men, for whose cause the sparowes are created: yet it is spoken properly of the children of God, which haue a greater right then by creation. But that dignitie doth not other waies appertaine to men then by the free liberalitie of God.

Mathew 10.

Mar. 8.

Luke 9

32. Who soeuer therefore shall confesse me before men, him will I confesse also before my father which is in heauen. 33. But who soeuer shall denie me before men, him will I also deny before my father which is in heauen. 34. Thinke not that I am come to send peace into the earth: I came not to sende peace, but a sword. 35. For I am come to set a man at variance against his father and the daughter against the mother, & the daughter in law against her mother in law. 36. And a mans enemies shall be they of his owne house.

38. For who soeuer shall be ashamed of me, & of my wordes among this adulterous & sinful generation: of him shall the sonne of man be ashamed also, when hee cometh in the glory of his Father, with the holy Angels.

26. For who soeuer shall be ashamed of me & of my words, of him shall the sonne of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his glory, and in the glory of his father, and of the holy angels.

Luke 12.

8. Also I say vnto you, who soeuer shall confesse me before men, him shall the Sonne of man confesse also before the Angels of God.

9. But he that shall denie me before men, shall be denied before the Angels of God.

In the same chapter.

51. Thinke ye that I am come to giue peace on earth? I tell you nay, but rather debate.

52. For from henceforth ther shall be 5. in one house deuided, three against two, & 2. against three.

53. The father shall be denied against the son & the son against the father: the mother against the daughter, and the daughter against the mother, the mother in law against her daughter in lawe, & the daughter in law, against her mother in law.

32 Who

32. *Who soeuer therefore.* He applieth that now to the present purpose which he spake before of the contempt of death, because wee must strue against the honour of death, least it draw vs from a free confelsion of faith which God doth straightly require, and the worlde cannot beare it. Therefore for this ende it becommeth the disciples of Christ to bee alwayes strong and couragious, that they may bee alwayes readie for Martyrdome. Further, though the confession of Christ is neglected as a light matter of the greater part of men: yet here it is accounted and worthily, as an especiall worship of God, and a singular exercise of godliuesse. For if earthly kings for the greater defence of their glory and increase of their riches, doe call their subiects to armes, why should not the faithfull defend the glory of their heavenly king at least with their tongue? Wherefore it is certaine that they doe quench faith as much as in them lieth, which suppress the flame inwardly, as though the outward profession of it were but vaine. For Christ doth not in vaine call vs here his witnesses, by whose mouth his name should be renowned in the world. I say the will of Christ is, that the profession of his name should be opposed against all false religions. Because it is an odious thing, he teacheth vs, that no mans faith should lie choaked in the heart, but that it should openly shew it selfe before men. Who soeuer auoydeth it and holdeth his peace, doth he not by dallying with the sonne of God, banish himselfe out of the household of God? There is required of the teachers a more notable confession of faith, then of priuate men. Then because all men are not indued with like measure of faith, as euery man doth more excell with the gifts of the holy Ghost, so ought he to go before in his example. Yet there is not one of the faithful which the Sonne of God will not haue to be a witnes. But where when, how oft, and how fari e our faith is to be professed, it is hard to set downe a certaine law: but the occasion is to be considered that none of vs doe faile in his dutie in time. And we must aske also of the Lord the spirit of wisdom and boldnesse, by whose direction we may knowe what is couenient, and that wee may boldly execute that which is certainly committed vnto vs.

Him will I confesse. There is added a promise, which in this behalfe should kindle our zeale. The Antitheses are to be noted: for if we compare our selues with the Sonne of G O D, howe vile a thing is it to denie him our testimonie, when hee offereth his againe to vs: as in steade of recompence? If we compare men mortall and of no estimation, with G O D and Angels, and all the heavenly glory, how much more excellent is that which hee promisseth, then that which hee requireth? For although men bee vnfaithfull and peruerse, yet Christ esteemeth as much of it, that wee giue testimonie to them, as if it were the companie of God and Angels. Therefore to amplifie it, it is sayd by Marke and Luke, *In this adulterous generation,* least we should thinke that we lost our labour, because the hearers are not meete for it. Further, if the promise moue not any man sufficiently, there followeth a horrible threatening, when Christ shall appeere to iudge the world, he will denie all them, which vnfaithfully haue denied him before men. Now let the enemies of the crosse goe and please them selues with their owne dissimulation, when as Christ shall blot them out of the booke of life. For who shall God acknowledge in the last day as children, but them which are offered to him by Christ? And hee declareth that he him-
selfe

selfe will bee a witnesse against them, that they shall not falsly thrust in themselves. That which is sayd, that Christe shall come in the glory of his Father, and the Angels, is thus much in sense: his diuine glory shall then be shewed openly. And the Angels as they doe now compasse the throne of God, so shall they attende vpon him to adorne his maiesty. The place out of the 12. of Luke answereth to the text of Matthew. But that which we set downe out of the 9. chapter, & out of Marke, seemeth to bee spoken at an other time, but because there is no difference in the doctrine, I thought good to ioyne them together.

L V K E. 51. *Thinke yee that I am come.* That which Christe required euennow of his disciples euery one of vs might performe for himselfe without any businesse, if all the worlde with one consent woulde subscribe to the doctrine of the Gospell. But because the greater part is not onely against it, but doeth also sharply resist it, we cannot confesse Christ without the variance and hatred of many. Therefore Christ admonisheth his disciples that they should prepare themselves to the battell: for of necessitie they must fight for the testimony of the truth. And so he preuenteth a double offence which otherwise might haue troubled their weake mindes not a little. Sith the Prophet promised peace & a quiet state vnder the kingdome of Christ, what shoulde the disciples else hope for, then to haue all things quiet whether to euer they should come? Now when Christ is called our peace, and the Gospell reconcileth vs to God: it followeth that there shoulde bee also brotherly concord amongst vs. Therefore to haue strifes and contentions kindled in the world where the Gospell is preached, seemeth not to agree with the propheties of the Prophets, and much lesse with the office of Christ, and nature of the Gospell. But that peace which the Prophetes commend, because it is ioyned with fayth, flourisheth not but amongst the true worshippers of God, and in godly consciences, and it belongeth not to the vnbelieuers, though it be offered them. And there is nothing but they can abide, rather then to come in fauour with God: whereby it cometh to passe that the message of peace, doeth stirre them vppe into a greater tumult. For in so much as Sathan possesseth a kingdome amongst the reprobate, he is made at the name of Christ, and as soone as the doctrine of the Gospell is vttered, their wickednesse is whetted, which lay before a sleepe. So Christ who is properly the author of peace, through the malice of men, is the occasion of troubles. Hereby we learne how much the wickednesse is of our corrupt nature, which doeth not onely defile so incomparable a gift, but doth turne it to the worst. In the meane season if tumultes doe rise, where the kingdome of Christe beginneth to shew it selfe, let vs not be troubled as with an new or an vnwonted matter: when he himselfe compareth his Gospell to a sworde, and sayeth that it is a separation or make bate. Some thinke that here is described the punishment which is layd vpon the contemners of the Gospell, that some of them should rise as enemies against others: but the text sheweth that Christ exhorteth here his disciples to constancy, if a great part of the world shuld dissent from them, and that with their voyce, as with the sound of a warlike trumpeter they should stirre vp very many enemies to their armes.

35. *For I am come to sette at variance.* Hereby is more evidently perceived that which wee layde before, that against the nature of the Gospell,

it falleth out through the fault of the wicked, that contentions & tumults do arise. For that which Malachie 4. 6. Ipeaketh of Iohn Baptist, belongeth to all the ministers of Christ, that they are sent for this ende, that they shoulde turne the heartes of the fathers to the children, & the heartes of the children to the fathers. But the malice of the wicked bringeth to passe that they which were ioy-
ned before, shoulde at the hearing of the voyce of Christe, bee deuided into tivo contrary parts, so that they should breake all bands of friendshipp. Furthermore Christ declareth that the world was come to that confusiō, that all lawes of nature should be little esteemed, & that no humanitie should be any more accounted off. For when Micheas complaineth 7. 6. that a mans enemies are them of his owne house, hee bewaileth an extreme and a sore corruption. Christ declareth that the same shall come to passe, where his doctrine shall be vttered, which otherwise were not to be beleueed. Yet he doth not meane that this shall be alwayes, as some froward men do dreame that they canot otherwise be good disciples of his, except they bee deuided from their parents, children & wiues, but al lawfull fellowshipp is rather sanctified by the vnity of faith. Christ onely giueth warning, that it becōmeth not his disciples to be troubled so oft as y^e falleth out.

Matth. 10.

37. He that loueth father or mother more then mee, is not worthy of mee. And hee that loueth sonne or daughter more then me, is not worthy of me.

38. And hee that taketh not his crosse, and followeth after mee, is not worthy of mee. 39.

He that will saue his life, shall lose it: & hee that loseth his life for my sake, shall saue it

40. He that receiueth you, receiueth me, and hee that receiueth mee: receiueth him that sent mee. 41. He that receiueth a Prophet, in the

name of a Prophet, shall receiue a Prophetes reward, and hee that receiueth a righteous man in the name of a righteous manne, shall receiue the reward of a righteous man.

42. And who soeuer shall giue vnto one of these liitle ones to drinke, a cup of colde water onely, in the name of a discipule: verily I say vnto you, hee shall not lose his reward.

Mar. 9.

41. And who soeuer shall giue you a cup of water to drinke for my names sake, because ye be long to christ
Verily I saye vnto you, hee shall not lose his reward.

Lnke. 14.

25. Now there went great multitudes with him, and hee turned & said vnto them.

26. If any man come to me, and hate not his father and mother, and wife and children, and brethren, and sisters: yea and his owne life also, he cannot be my discipule.

27. And who soeuer beareth not his crosse, & commeth after me, cannot be my discipule

28. For which of you mindeth to builde a tower, sitteth not down before, & counteth the cost, whether he haue sufficient to performe it.

29. Least that after he hath laid the foundation, and is not able to performe it, all that beholde it, begin to mocke him.

30. saying: this man began to builde, and was not able to make an end?

31. Or, what king going to warre against an other king, sitteth not downe first, and taketh not counsell, whether he be able with ten thousand to meete him that commeth against him with twenty thousand?

32. Or else while he is yet a great way off, he sendeth an ambassage, and desireth conditions of peace.

32. So likewise who soeuer hee bee of you, that forsaketh not all that he hath, he cannot be my discipule.

37. He

37. *Hee that loueth.* Because this is very sharpe and repugnant to the sense of nature, to make them his enemies which should be most his freinds: therefore Christ sayth now that we cannot of any other condition be his disciples. He doth not command vs to lay from vs humane affections, he doth not forbid, but that euery man may performe due beneuolence to his freindes: but hee onely willet that what mutuall loue soeuer there is amongst men, should be brought into order, that godlinesse may haue the cheife preheminance. Therefore let the husband loue his wife, the father, the sonne, and againe the sonne the father, so that the loue towards men do not ouerwhelm that duty which is due to Christ. For as amongst men themselues, some (as we are tied vnto them with a straighter band) are more loued then others, so were it an vnworthy act if Christ alone should not be preferred before them all. And certainly we doe not sufficiently account with thankfull minde what it is to be a disciple of Christ, except the excellencie of this dignitie doe preuaile to bringe vnder all the affections of the flesh. Luke hath a harder speech, *Who soeuer hateth not his father*, but the sense is the same, If the loue of our freindes doth hinder vs from following Christ, it must be mightily withstoode. As Paul sayth to the Philip. 3. 8. that he accounted things losse for Christs sake, which he esteemed before as aduantage to him, & that he lost all those things willingly.

38. *He that taketh not vp his crosse.* He proceedeth from a particular to the generall, that wee might know that wee cannot otherwise bee accounted for his disciples, except wee be prepared to beare many dangers. If it torment vs and vex vs, that wee haue discord for the cause of the Gospell, with father, or wife or children, let this condition come to our memorie, that Christ dedicateth all his disciples to the crosse. Yet let vs remember this comfort, that in bearing the crosse, we become the fellowes of Christ: so it shall come to passe, that all bitterness shall easily become pleasant. The reprobate are no lesse tied to their crosse, and cannot shake it off, it triue they neuer so much: but because the crosse without CHRIST is accursed, there remaineth for them an unhappie ende. Wherefore let vs learne to knit these two together, the faithfull must take vp the crosse that they may follow the maister: that is, that they may conforme themselves after his example, and as faithfull companions walke in his steps.

39. *He that will saue his life.* Least the former doctrine (as it is very hard and troublesome to flesh) should of it selfe worke but small effect, Christ in this sentence confirmeth the same two wayes. For he sayth that they are to ouercome and preuident: when they shall with themselves thinke they haue preserved their life best, they are deceiued, and they haue losse the same: Again, they which neglect life, shall loose nothing, because they shall saue the same. Wee knowe that all things are done and omitted for life sake: there is suche a loue of the same planted in vs: wherefore it was necessary for Christ, that hee might encourage his to contemne death, so to promise and to threaten. To finde life, signifieth in this place to possesse the same as vnder a safe custody: for they which are too couetous of earthly life, while they keepe themselves out of all perils, they please themselves with a vaine trust, as if they had well provided for themselves, but their life fenced with suche defences, shall flee away, because at length they must die, and death shall be to them destruction.

On the contrary part where the faithfull doe offer themselves to death, their soule which seemeth at that present to vanishe away, is restored to a better life. Furthermore, because there are some found which sometime do loote their life, cyther for ambition sake, or for a furie, Christ expressly declareth the cause why we should suffer death. It is doubtfull whether this sermon was made at another time, which Luke declareth. The Lord doth there also exhort his disciples to beare the crosse, but not in so long a sermon. Also for the confirming of this sentence he addeth presently two similitudes, whereof there is no mention made in Mathew: but for the consent in the summe of the matter, I made no doubt to bring those things which are found in Luke hither.

L V K E. 18. *Which of you is it, minding.* Least it should bee troublesome to any man to follow Christ on this conditiou, that hee should renounce all his desires, there is a profitable admonition proposed, that men should meditate before hand what the profession of the Gospell doth require. For heereof it cometh to passe that many doe fall away, at all light temptations, because they fancied to themselves mee, ewanton delights, as though they should alwayes be in the shade and in idlenes. Therefore he shall neuer be a fit seruant of Christ except he prepare himselfe to the war a long time before. Now for this purpose doe the similitudes very well agree. It is a matter full of trouble and wearines to builde, and also small welcome by reason of the charge: also no man taketh war vpon him, but against his will, because it bringeth with it so many discomforties, and threatneth almost ruine to mankind: and yet the profit of dwelling allureth men that they doubt not to lay out their substance: necessitie also compelleth, so that they refuse no expences in making wars. But there remaineth a farre more excellent reward for the builders of the temple of God, and for them which giue their names to the warres of Christ. For Christians doe neither labour for a transitorie building, nor fight for a vaine triumph. But that saying of Christ: If any king be vnable to beare the brunt of battell, least he bee ouercome with shame, let him seeke peace with the enemy: cannot be applyed to this present purpose, as if wee might make any reconciliation with the spirituall enemy if riches and forces doe sayle vs. For it were a fond thing to wrest all particular clauises in parables to the matter which is handled. But the Lord simply meaneth that wee should so be furnished, least wee beeing taken without iust offence, doe shamefully turne our backs. Neyther is euerie one of vs a king, which doth make warre with his owne forces. And as their rashnes is reprinted by this doctrine, which foolishly leape beyond their measure, or make themselves pleasures, not thinking of bearing the crosse so wee must beeware least this meditation whereto Christ exhorteth vs, doe feare vs, or slacke our forwardnesse. Many because they haue not presently taught themselves the law of patience, euen from the prisons, they, through nicenes returne back fro the course of their race: for they wil not abide to be Christians of any other condition, then that they may be free from the crosse. Others, while they haue proposed vnto them a conditiou hard & vnsauorie to the flesh, dare not come to Christ. But there is no cause why the knowledge of our want should discourage vs, when the Lord doth helpe in time. Certainly I grant, if wee account the charges, wee are all so poore and weake, that wee can not lay one stone,

or draw the sword against the enemy. But sith the Lord from heaven will giue vs matter, costes, weapons and forces, our sluggishnesse or slouthfullnes shall haue no pretence of the hardnes. Therefore the purpose of Christ is to admonish his of bearing the crosse, that they may gird themselves with strength.

33. So likewise who soeuer hee bee of you, that forsaketh not. This clause doeth shew what the accounting of the charges doeth meane, whereat Christ commandeth his to begin: namely, that they must meditate of this account, to forsake all things. For in vaine they doe thrust themselves in, to profess Christianitie, which are delighted with a sweete and idle estate voide of the crosse. Also vnderstand that they must renounce all things, which doe so preferre Christ as before their life: as also all the desires of the flesh, so that nothing shall hinder them from a right course. For if any man shall precisely vrge the letter, he shall deale preposterously: as though no man were the disciple of Christ, but he that should throw what soeuer hee possesseth into the sea, and so should be diuorced from his wife, and should bid his children farewell. By such fantasies, foolish men haue bene allured to monkerie, that being willing to come to Christe, haue fallen from humanitie. But no man doth more truly renounce all things which he possesseth, then hee which being readie to leaue all things at euery moment, doth imploy himselfe wholly as free and bound vnto the Lord, and passing by all lets, doth follow his calling. So the true deniall which the Lord requireth of his, is not settled so much in the action (as they say) as in affection, that euery man living for a day, shoulde not set his heart vpon that which hee gouerneth with his hand.

MAT. 40. He that receiueth you. This is an other comfort, that though a great part of the world be offended with the disciples of Christe, so that they should prouoke the hatreds of all men against them: yet the Lord, that he might allure many to shew kindnesse to them, disdayneth not to account it as receiued to his owne tables, what soeuer is giuen to them. For thereby it appeareth howe much he loueth them, while hee suffereth what things soeuer were done to them, to bee imputed to himselfe. Also hee doeth not speake so much of the receiuing of the doctrine as of the men. I grant that this latter doth depend of the former: but the purpose of Christ is to be considered: for his mind was to speake, that which he saw most apt and fit for the helping of their infirmities. If any man should receiue them louingly, and should gently helpe them he would accept that kindnesse as to himselfe, as if hee had bene liberally entertained in their person: and not so onely but they offered a sacrifice of a good saour vnto God the father.

41. He that receiueth a Prophet. Hee beginneth at the Prophets, but descending at length to the lowest degree, he comprehendeth all his disciples, Therefore he commendeth without exception the true worshippers of God, and the louers of his Gospell. And to receiue in the name of a Prophet and of a righteous man, signifieth as much as to do them good for the honour of the Gospell, and in respect of godlines. For though God commandeth vs to doe the duties of charitie to all mankind: yet for good cause he preferreth his about the rest, that there may be an especiall care and regard had of them.

The reward of a Prophet. The interpreters doe expound this clause diuersly:
T
Some

Some thinke that here is noted a mutuall recōpence, that is, that the Prophets of God should giue spirituall things for earthly gifts: but if this exposition be receiued, what shall be the reward of the iust? Others vnderstand that they shall be partakers of the same reward which is laid vp for the Prophets and the righteous, because they had bene liberall towards them. Many referre it to the communion of Saintes, that as by our liberalitie wee declare that wee are one body with the seruants of Christ, so by this meanes wee are made partakers of all good things, which Christ communicateth amongst the members of his body. I do more simply take it for a reward which is fit for the worthinesse of the person vpon whom the liberalitie shall be bestowed. For Christ meaneth that this shall be a notable declaration, how much he esteemeth his Prophets & so euery of his disciples: for by the large reward it shall appeare, that none of them was lost, which was bestowed vpon the. And he amplifieth the matter in that he promisseth a reward euen for the meanest deeds, as that is, to giue a cup of colde water. He calleth not only the litle ones, which are the last & of least account in the Church, but al his disciples which are troden downe by the prid of the world

Mathew

Marke 6.

Luke 9.

12. And they went out and preached that men should amend their liues.

13. And they cast out many deuils: & they anointed many that were sicke with oyle, and healed them.

6. And they went out, and went through euery towne preaching the Gospell, and healing euery where.

12. And they went out and preached. Mathew passeth ouer with silence what the Apostles did: Marke & Luke do declare that they went about to exercise the office laid vpon them: by whose words that which I sayd, doth more evidently appeare, that this office which Christ then layd vpon them, was but for a time, & that of a few dayes. For they say that they went through cities and townes, and it is not to bee doubted but that shortly after they returned to their maister, as shalbe shewed in an other place. This onely needeth to be interpreted, that Marke reporteth, that they annointed many that were sicke with oyle. For it is demanded, for what purpose they vsed oyle, sith Christ had giuen them power of healing. Some learned men thinke that it was a kinde of medicine. And I grant that oyle was much vsed in those countries, but there is nothing more vnlikely, then that the Apostles should vse ordinarie and naturall remedies which should darken with cloudes the miracles of Christ. For they were not instructed by the Lord in the Arte and skill of surgerie, but they are rather commanded to worke miracles which should stirre vp all Iudea. Therefore I thinke that this was a visible signe of spirituall grace, wherby they declared that the healing proceeded of the secret power of God, whose ministers they were: for it was vsed vnder the law, by oyle to figure the grace of the spirit. But howe preposterously they imitated the Apostles, which established in the Church a perpetuall ceremonie of annointing the sicke, doth thereby appeare, that Christ gaue the gifte of healing to the Apostles, not that they should conuey the same by right of inheritaunce to their posteritie, but that it should be for a time a seale of the doctrine of the Gospell. And as this day the ignorance of the Papists is too ridiculous, which challenge filthy annoynting (wherby they bring them that are halfe dead to the graue,) for a sacrament.

Mathew

Matthew. 11.

Marke

Luke. 7

1. And it came to passe that when Iesus had made an end of commanding his twelve disciples, he departed thence to teach and preach in their cities.

2. And when Iohn heard in the prison the workes of Christ, he sent two of his disciples, and sayd vnto him.

3. Art thou he that should come, or shall we looke for another?

4. And Iesus answering said vnto them: Goe and shewe Iohn, what things yee haue heard and seene.

5. The blind receiue sight, & the halt go: the Lepers are cleansed, and the deafe heare: the dead are raised vp, and the poore receiue the gospel.

6. And blessed is he that shall not be offended in me.

18. And the disciples of Iohn shewed him of all these things

19. So Iohn called two of his disciples, and sent them to Iesus, saying: Art thou he that should come, or shall we wait for another?

A little after.

21. And at that time he cured many of their sicknesse and plagues, and of euill spirittes, and vnto many blinde men he gaue their sight.

22. And Iesus answered & said vnto them: Go your wayes, & shew Iohn what things yee haue seene & heard that the blind see, the halt goe, the lepers are cleansed, the deafe heare, the dead rise again, and the poore receiue the gospel. 23. And blessed is he that shall not be offended in mee

1. And it came to passe. In this place Matthew sheweth nothing else, but that Christ ceased not from the course of his office, while the Apostles laboured onther where. Therefore asloone as he had sent them, with their commaundements to go through Iudea, he applied himselfe to teaching in Galile. But there is waight & force in that word commanding: for Matthew declareth that they had not a free embassage permitted them, but that it was prescribed and tolde to them what they should say, and how they should behaue themselves.

2. And when Iohn heard. The Euangelists doe not meane, that Iohn was moued with myracles, so that then at length he acknowledged the mediator: but because he saw that Christ became famous, and accounting that the ful and perfect time was come, wherein his testimonie was approued in him, he sent his disciples to him. That is too absurde, that some thinke that he sent for his own cause also, as though that he had not beene fully perswaded and plainly taught, him to be the Christ. That is also a friuolous imagination of them, which imagine that when the Baptist was neare his death, he should demand of Christe what message he should beare from his mouth to the fathers which were dead. But it is euident that this holy cryer of Christ, because hee saw himselfe not to bee farre distant from the ende of his race, and that his Disciples remained as yet in suspence, though hee hadde bestowed much labour in teaching them, sought this last remedie to heale their infirmity. Hee faithfully behaued himselfe in this (as I sayde) that his disciples might embrace Christe without delay. Sith by dayly calling vpon, they had profited so little, he doeth not feare without a cause, least after his death they should fall away wholly: therefore by sending them to Christe, his will was to waken their slouthfulness throughly. Againe, the pastours of the Church are in this place admonished of their dutie, that they should not endeavour to holde disciples addist, or as it were bound to them, but to direct them to CHRIST, who is the onely maister.

T. 2

Iohn

Iohn at the beginning professed himselfe not to be the bridegroom. Therefore which is the part of a faithfull friend of the bridegroomes, he offereth a chaste & apure spouse to Christ himselfe, who is the onely bridegroom of the Church.

Paul 1. Cor. 11. 2. declareth that he had the same care: & the example of them both is proposed to all the ministers of the Gospell to follow.

3. *Art thou hee that should come?* Iohn taketh that for granted, which the disciples had learned from their childhood. For it was a common lesson of godlinesse amongst all the Iewes, that there should come a Christ, the authour of saluation and perfect blessednesse, wherefore hee mooueth no question of that principle: but demandeth onely whether Iesus is that promised redeemer. For it behooued them after they were perswaded of the redemption promised in the law and the Prophets, to embrace the same offered in the person of Christ. Whē he addeth, *shall wee looke for another?* In this clause hee sharply reproveth their slouthfulnes, which being taught so certainly before, shoulde wauer so long with doubtfull minds. He also sheweth what is the nature & force of faith, namely, that being grounded in the truth of God, it loketh not about hither or thither nor varieth: th it being content with Christ alone, it turneth not any other way.

For, and shew Iohn. As Iohn had taken the person of an other vpon him: so hee commandeth to carie worde backe againe to him, which shoulde rather haue bene obserued of his disciples. That he aunswereth not simply, he doth it first for that purpose, because it were better the thing it selfe shoulde speake: then, that he might giue his forerunner more free scope of teaching: yet he doth not giue him in his miracles a naked matter without forme, but he applyeth the miracles to their end out of the Oracles of the Prophets. And he noteth one place especially out of the 35. chapter of Esay, and another out of the 61. that the disciples of Iohn might know that to bee fulfilled and performed, which the Prophet witnesse of the kingdome of Christ. In the first place is contained a description of the kingdom of Christ, vnder the which gouernemēt God promisseth that he will be so liberall and bountifull, that he would helpe and remedy all diseases. And it is no doubt but that he speaketh of a spirituall deliuerance from all euils and miseries. But Christ by outward signes (as it is sayde before) sheweth that he came to be a spirituall phisician to cure soules. So it came to passe that the disciples might depart without any wauering doubt, hauing a plaine answere without obscure or vaine circumstances. The last place is like to the first in this, that teaching that the treasures of the grace of God for the world were proposed in Christ, it declareth that Christ was peculiarly sent to the poore and the afflicted. And he alleageth this prophesie purposely: partly that he might teach all his humility: partly, that hee might take away the offense which the wisdom of the flesh might conceiue at his contemptible flock. For as we are proud by nature, we esteeme almost of nothing, except it bee set forth with much glory. But the Church of Christ being gathered of poore men is furthest off all from that gay and gorgious shewe. From hence hath the contempt of the Gospell crept into many, because it is not receiued of all great men, and of men of great dignitie. But howe ouerthwarte and wicked this estimation of the Gospell is, Christ doeth admonishe vs by the nature of the Gospell it selfe, when as it is sente but to the poore and abiectes, whereof

whereof it followeth that it is no newe thing, or ought that should trouble vs, if it be despised of all the mightie, which being puffed vp with their riches, doe leaue no void place for the grace of God: nay, if it be refused of the most part of men, there is no cause why we should maruaile, when as there is scarce the hundredth man, which swelleth not with a vaine confidence. And as Christ defendeth his Gospell from contempt: so againe he declareth who they be that are fit to receiue the grace of saluation which is there offered: and he calling louingly miserable sinners to the hope of saluation, he raysed them vp into an assured hope. For it is certaine that the poore are called, whose condition is miserable and vile, and which are nothing accounted of. Therefore as euery man is most abiect and meane, let not his pouertie cause him to despaire, but let it comfort him the rather to seeke after Christ. But let vs remember that none else are accounted poore, but they that thinke themselves to bee such: that is, which lie oppressed with the feeling of their owne pouertie.

6. *And blessed is he.* By this clause it was the will of Christ, to teach, that if any will remaine constant and firme in the faith of the Gospell, hee must resist and strue against offences which shall arise to the hinderance of the course of faith. But this is a preuention wherewith hee shieldeth vs against all offences: for we shall neuer want occasions to moue vs to refuse the same, vntill we lift our minds aboue all offences. Therefore this is first to be noted, we must warre with offences, that we may stand fast in the faith of Christ. Neither is Christ wrongfully called the rocke of offence, and the stumbling stone whereat many do fall. It is certaine that that commeth to passe through our fault: but he cureth this disease also, when he pronounceth them blessed which are not offended at him. Whereby we also gather that the vnbeleeuers haue no excuse, though innumerable offences fall out: for what should hinder them that they should not come to Christ? or what should offend them that they should fall from Christ? namely, because he with his crosse appeareth as one contemned and vile, being cast out with his crosse to the reproches of the world: because he calleth vs into the societie of his afflictions: furthermore, because his glorie and maiestie, as it is spirituall, is neglected of the worlde. Then, because his doctrine is contrary to our vnderstanding: also because that by the craft of Sathan many troubles doe arise, which defame and bring the name of Christ and the Gospell into hatred. Lastly, because euery man, as of set purpose frameth to himselfe a heape of offences, because that with no lesse malice then desire, all men withdraw themselves from Christ.

Mathew. 11

Marke

Luke. 7.

7. *And as they departed, Iesus began to speake vnto the multitude, of Iohn: What went ye out into the wilderness to see? A reede shaken with the winde?*

8 *But what went ye out to se? A man clothed in soft raiment? Beholde, they that wear soft cloathing, are in kings houses.*

9. But

24. *And when the messengers of Iohn were departed, he began to speake to the people, of Iohn, what went yee out into the wilderness to see? A reede shaken with the winde?*

25. *But what went yee out to see? A manne clothed in soft raiment? Beholde, they which*

T 3.

are

. But what went you out to see ? A Prophet ? Yea I say vnto you, and more then a Prophet.

10. For this is he of whom it is written: Beholde, I sende my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

11. Verely I say vnto you, among them which are begotten of women, arose there not a greater then Iohn Baptist: not with standing, he that is least in the kingdome of heauen, is greater then hee.

12. And from the time of Iohn Baptist hitherto, the kingdome of heauen suffereth violence, and the violent take it by force.

13. For all the Prophetes and the lawe prophesied vnto Iohn,

14. And if ye will receiue it, this is Elias which was to come.

15. Hee that hath eares to heare, let him heare.

are gorgeously appavelled, and linedelicately, are in kings courts

26. But what went yee forth to see ? A Prophet ? Yea I say to you, and greater then a Prophet

27. This is he of whom it is written: Behold, I send my messenger before thy face, which shall prepare thy way before thee.

28. For I say vnto you, there is no greater Prophet then Iohn, amongst them that are begotten of women: neuer thelesse, he that is the least in the kingdome of God, is greater then he.

Luke 16.

16. The law and the Prophets endured vntill Iohn: and since that time the kingdome of God is preached, and euery man preaseth vnto it.

7. And as they departed. Christ commendeth Iohn to the people, that they might remember that which they had heard of him, and giue credite to his testimonie: for his name was famous amongst the people, and they spake honourably of him: but his doctrine was smally esteemed, and they were but fewe which had respect to his ministry. But Christ telleth them that they lost their labour which went forth into the wildernesse to see him, except they would reuerently apply their munes and studies to his doctrine. Therefore the meaning of the wordes is this, *you went forth into the wildernesse*, your lightnes was fond and to be laughed at, if your iourney had not some certayne ende. But you neither sought the pompe of the world, nor had any other foolish thing, but your purpose was to heare the wordes of God out of the mouth of the Prophet. Therefore that you may now shew what fruit you had of your purpose, let that bee well remembered which he spake vnto you.

8. *They that weare soft cloathing.* They are deceiued which thinke that courtly daintinesse is condemned by this saying of Christe: there are very many other places, where the pride and immoderate glory in apparell is reprobued. But the simple meaning of this place is, that there was no such thing in the wildernesse, which should allure the people thither. For all things there were rude and filthy, which should bring nothing but a lothsomnesse: they should rather looke in kings courtes, for fine trimming which delighteth the eyes. Though he may seeme also after a sort to reprobue the tyranny of Herod, for that hee held Iohn in pryson, because hee had freely condemned his incestuous marriage. Therefore he declareth that it is but a fonde thing to esteeme of Prophets according to the good will and fauour of Princes, beccause that flatterers doe raigne there

there for the most part.

11. *Verely I say vnto you.* In these wordes is not onely the authoritie of Iohn confirmed, but also his doctrine is preferred above the old prophetes, that the people might consider the right purpose of his ministerie. For because they accounted not to what purpose he was sent, it came to passe that they profited almost nothing by his doctrine. Therefore Christ extolleth and placeth him about the order of the Prophets, that they might learne and know that he had some peculiar and more excellent commandement giuen vnto him. But that he in an other place doth denie himselfe to be a Prophet, is not contrary to this title of Christ. For he was not a Prophet after the order of others, whom the Lord in times past had set ouer his Church as interpreters of the law, and messengers of his will: yet he was more excellent then the Prophets, because hee spake not a farre off, and darkely vnder shadowes: but he tolde them that the time of their redemption was at hand and before them. To the which purpose also appertaineth the prophesie of Malachie, which presently followeth: namely that Iohn excelled in this, that hee was the crier and the forerunner of Christ. For though the old Prophets spake of his kingdome, yet they were not placed as Iohn was before his face, that they should shew him present. Let the readers looke the rest out of the first chapter of Luke.

There arose not. The Lord proceedeth further, as much as Iohn exceeded the prophets, so much more excellent are the ministers of the gospel then he. They haue erred too ignorantly, which thought that Christ compared himselfe with Iohn, for he speaketh not here of the dignity of the person, but the excellency of the office is commended: which doth more euidently appeare by the words of Luke. *there arose not a greater prophet.* For the greatnesse is expressly referred to the office of teaching. In summe, Iohn hath so excellent a title giuen him, to that end that the Iewes should the more diligently obserue the message that he brought. Then the teachers which should shortly after follow him, are preferred before him, that the maiesty of the gospell might bee preferred above the law, and also that message which came betweene them both. And as Christe would prepare the Iewes to receiue the Gospell, so it is meete for vs to bee awakened at this day, that we may reuerently heare Christ, speaking to vs out of his high throne of his heavenly glory: least that hee reuenge our contempt with that horrible curse, which he denounceth against the vnfaithfull by Malachie in the same place. The kingdome of heauen and of God, is taken here, as in other places before, for the new estate of the church, because that at the coming of Christ there was promised a restitution of all thinges. That which I translated the least, is read in the Greek in the comparative degree the lesser. But after this maner the sense is the plainer, while it appeareth that it comprehendeth, all the ministers of the Gospell. Also, that many being endued with a smal portion of faith, are far inferiour to Iohn, this nothing letteth, but that their preaching may be more excellent in that it proposeth Christ the conquerour of death, and the Lord of life, which hath performed the euerlasting cleansing by his only sacrifice and by taking away the vaile, it listeth the disciples into the heavenly sanctuary.

12. *From the time of Iohn.* I doubt not but that Christ commendeth the maiestic of the Gospell of this, that it was sought after with a seruent de-

fire of many. For as God raised vppe Iohn, that he might be a proclamer of the kingdome of his sonne, so the spirite gaue effecte to his doctrine, that it might enter into the heartes of menne, and might kindle their zeale. Therefore it appeareth that it came from God, which so strangely and sodainly spreadeth out, and raiseih great stirres. But in the second clause there is added a restrainte, *that the violent doe take it.* For because the greater part was no more moued, then as if the Prophets had neuer spoken of Christe, or as if Iohn had neuer come as a witnesse of him, Christ declareth that the violence whereof he speaketh, is found but in one certaine kinde of men. The meaning thereof is, there is now a great concourse of men, as if that men would violently enter into the possession of the kingdome of God. For at the opening of the mouth of one manne, they doe not onely couetously, but with violent force they doe receiue the grace offered. And though very many are slouthfull, and are no more touched, then if Iohn should tell a tale in the wildernesse, nothing appearing to them: yet many runne with violent zeale. And to this purpose tendeth the saying of Christ, that they are inexcusable which contemptuously, as with closed eyes doe passe by the manifest power of God, which shone as wel in the teachers as in the hearers. Yet by these wordes we learne what is the true nature and force of fayth: namely, that men shoulde not coldly and for fashon giue eare to God when he doth speake, but they should aspire to him with an ardent affection, and breake through as it were with a violent endeuour.

LVKE. 16. *The lawe and the Prophets to Iohn.* Because the Lord had sayd that those things which the Prophets had foretolde (of the renewing of the Church that should be) was an entrance to the matter for the peoples sake, now he compareth the ministerie of Iohn with the law & the Prophets, as if he shuld haue said: it is no maruel if God doe now so mightily worke in the mindes of men. For he doeth not shew himselfe a farre off, as hee did before in obscure shadowes, but openly and at hand is he present to establish his kingdom. Hereof it followeth that they haue lesse excuse, which do stubbornely refuse the doctrine of Iohn, the contēners of the law & the prophets. There is an emphasis in the word of Prophesying, for the law & the Prophets did not set God before the eyes, but only by figures they drew out as in a shadow, one absent.

Now we see whereto this comparison tendeth: namely, that it is not meete that men should be now so cold, sith God sheweth himselfe present vnto them, which helde the olde people in suspence by propheties. But there is no absurditie in that, that Christe doeth now number Iohn amongst the ministers of the Gospell, whom he had first placed in the middest betweene them and the Prophets, because his preaching, though it were a parte of the Gospell, yet it was but a certaine rudiment of the same.

MAT. 14. *And if ye will receiue it.* Now hee doth declare more plainly howe Iohn began to preach the kingdome of God: for this is verily that Elias which was promised to be sent before the face of God, for Christe would that the Iewes shoulde now see and know that great and terrible comming of God spoken of before by Malachi, sith that Elias which is there promised, doeth now execute the office of a forerunner. Also in these wordes (*if ye will receiue it*) he reprooueth the hardnesse of their hearts, that are so maliciously blind in so great light. But what if he be not receiued, shall he not be that Elias? It

It is not the meaning of Christ to say that the office of Iohn doth depend vpon their likings: but after he had sayd that he was that Elias, he reproceth them o slouth & vnthankfulness, if he haue not that credit, which hee deserueth.

15. *He that hath eares.* We know that Christ vseth this sentence as oft as he entreateth of an earnest matter, which hee would should be diligently & carefully noted. Yet he also declareth that the misteries, whereof he speaketh, are not receiued of all: because that many of the hearers are deafe, or else haue stopped their eares. But because that man is not only hindered by his owne incredulitie, but that diuers do also hinder others, christ here exhorteth the childre of God, whose eares are opened, that they should bee diligent to consider this excellent mystery of God, and that they should not waxe deafe with the vnbeleeuers.

Mat. 11.

16. *But whereunto shall I liken this generation? It is like vnto little children, which sit in the markets, and call vnto their fellows.*

17. *And say, wee haue piped vnto you, and yee haue not daunced, wee haue mourned to you, and yee haue not lamented.*

18. *For Iohn came neiether eating nor drinking, and they say, he hath a deuill.*

19. *The Sonne of man came eating and drinking, and they say, behold a glutton and a drinker of wine, a freind vnto Publicans and sinners: but wisdome is iustified of her childre.*

Marke.

Luke 7.

29. *Then all the people that heard, and the Publicans, iustified God, being baptised with the baptisme of Iohn.*

30. *But the Pharises and the expounders of the law despised the counsell of God against themselves, and were not baptised of him.*

31. *And the Lorde sayde, whereunto shall I liken the menne of this generation? and what are they like vnto.*

32. *They are like vnto children sitting in the market place, and crying one to another, and saying, wee haue piped to you, and yee haue not daunced: we haue mourned to you, and yee haue not wept.*

33. *For Iohn Baptist came, neiether eating bread, nor drinking wine: and yee say he hath the deuill.*

34. *The sonne of man is come, and eateth and drinketh: and yee say beholde a man which is a glutton, & a drinker of wine, a freind of Publicans and sinners. 13. But wisdome is iustified of all her children.*

LV. 29. *Then all the people that heard.* This clause is omitted by Math which yet bringeth great light to the text: for hereof Christ tooke occasion to reprove the Scribes, when he saw that they remained so obstinate in contempt of God. The summe of this place is this, the common people and the Publicans glorified God: but the Scribes, which gloried too much in the trust they had to their owne vnderstanding, made no account of any thing that was spoken by Christ. And this at the first sight much darkned and deformed the glory of the Gospel, that Christ gathered not his disciples, but of the dregs and offscouring of the people: and because that they which excelled either in shewe of holinesse or of learning, refused him.

But it was the Lords will to shew this spectacle, as an example in the beginning, least that either the men that then liued, or the posterity that should followe after, should esteeme of the Gospell by the auctoritie of men that allowed of it: for almost all men are by nature bent to this sin. And there is nothing more preposterous, then that the truth of GOD should be brought in subjection to the iudgement of men, whose quicknes of witte and sharpnesse of vnderstanding, is altogether nothing but meere vanitie. Therefore, as Paule sayeth, 1. Cor. 1. 27. God chose the weake and foolish things in the world, that he might ouerthrow the mighty and the wise from their imagination. But it is our part to preferre the foolishnes of God, (as the same Paule teacheth 1. Cor 1. 31.) before all the excellencie of mans wisdom.

They iustified God. This speech is worthy to be noted, that they are sayd to iustifie God, which with reuerence embracing his sonne, do subscribe to the doctrine brought by him. Wherefore it is no maruaile, if the holy Ghost doe euery where adorne faith with most excellent titles, giuing the price vnto it in the worshipping of God, accounting it to be most perfect obedience. For what holier office can be imagined, then to ascribe vnto God his iustice due to him? Yet this word iustifying doth generally extend to all the prayse of God: as if it should be sayd, that God was approued and glorified of the people, which rested in the doctrine which came from him. And as faith iustifieth God: so it cannot be, but that incredulitie is blasphemie against him, & spoyleth him of his prayse. But this phrase teacheth vs, that men are after this manner brought rightly to beleue, when they haue bid the wisdom of the fleithe farewell, accounting that nothing proceedeth from God, but that which is right and pure, not taking so much libertie to themselues, as once to murmur at his worde and his workes.

Being baptised. Luke meaneth that the fruite of Baptisme, which they had receiued, did then appeare: for it was a good preparatiue for them towards the receiuing of the Gospell, and this was a token of godlines that they had offered themselues to be baptised. Now the Lord leadeth them from that mean beginning to higher degrees: euen as the Scribes by despising the baptisme of Iohn, through their owne pride did shut vp the gate of faith against themselues. Therefore if wee desire to ascend to sound perfection, we must first take heede that wee despise not the least of Gods callings and matters. but let vs be humbly prepared to begin at the least elements. Secondly, wee must doe our diligence, that our faith though it haue a weake beginning, may by degrees dayly profit more and more.

30. *They despised the counsell of God against themselues.* The counsell of God is for honours cause opposed against the wicked pride of the Scribes: for there is a force in the word counsell, which deliuereth this doctrine of GOD from the contempt of men. But word for word Luke sayeth that they despised it against themselues. Neither do I reiect that sense, which others do rather allow, that they were rebellious to their owne destruction. But because the words of Luke are plaine, and that they are thus vsed oft, I had rather translate it in *themselves*: as if he should haue said, though they withstood it not openly and directly: yet, as they swelled with an inward pride inwardly, so they despised it in themselves.

31. *Whereunto shall I liken this generation?* Hee meaneth not all the men that then liued: but hee speaketh properly of the Scribes and their flatterers. Hee vpbraideth them, that when the Lord had attempted diuers wayes to draw the vnto him, they most obstinately refused his grace. But hee vseth a similitude which is taken, as it is supposed of a game commonly vsed by children: neither is this coniecture vnlike, that children leading seuerall daunces, did so sing one to an other. And verely I thinke that Christe purposely that hee might overthrow the pride of the Scribes, tooke occasion to reprove them of children playing together, declaring that though they were neuer so proud, yet the song which children sing, while they play in the market place is inough to condemn them.

32. *For Iohn came.* When as this man liued an austere and straight life, sounded repentance and sharp reprehensions, as though he sang a mournfull song, and the Lorde himselfe, as with a merry and cheerefull song applyed himselfe more pleasantly to allure them to his father: what cause should there bee that neither of these wayes profited nothing amongst them, but their yron obstinacy or hardnesse of hearts? But this place teacheth vs why there was so great difference in outward shewe of life betweene Christ and the Baptist, which yet did both apply themselves to one matter: for it was the will of the Lord by this varietie in taking as it were vpon him diuerse persons, the more to conuince the ynbeleeuers: for that he bending and transforming himselfe to their manners, could not yet bend them. If that all excuse be taken away from the men of that age, which with obstinate malice refused both those wayes, which the Lord vsed to call them by, we also are in their person found guiltie: when as the Lord omiteth no kind of cheerefull dealing, or of mournfull & sorrowfull musicke to draw vs vnto him, wee remaine as dead stones. As menne not well in their minde, or out of their wit, are commonly called Lunatique. so they called Iohn, a man possessed with a deuill.

34. *The sonne of man is come.* To eat and to drinke in this place signifieth to liue after the comon order of men: as Christ saith, Iohn came neither eating nor drinking: because he liued not after the comon order of men, for that he abstained from the comon meates and common order of diet: which Luke expresseth more plainly in these words, *not eating bread, neither drinking wine.* Let them note this place: which thinke the estate of perfection to be in outward austeritie of life, & they thinke him to liue an Angels life, which liueth sparingly, or pineth away himselfe with hunger. For according to this rule, Iohn should bee better then the sonne of God: but this is rather to be holden as a rule, bodily exercise profiteth little, but godlines is profitable vnto all things, 1. Tim. 4.8. Yet vnder this pretence liberty may not be given to the flesh, to pamper vpp it: selfe in delicacie & wantonnes: only superstition must be auoyded, least foolish men imagining perfectiō to be in these outward elements, they neglect the spirituall worship of God. Adde this also, Christ applied himselfe to liue after the common order of mans life, that he might sanctifie godly temperance, and not nourish the superfluitie of others either by any shew or example of his.

35. *But wisdome is iustified.* This place is diuersly expounded by the interpreters. Some say that wisdome was iustified or acknowledged by the
Iewes.

Iewes to be without fault, in that they being faultie in their owne consciences, and iudges of their own infidelitie, were enforced to witnesse that the doctrine was good and holy, which they reiected. And they take the children of wisdom for the Iewes, who set out themselues with this title. Others do thinke that it is spoken in scorne: as thus, doe you in this maner approue the wisdom of God, whose children you boast your selues to be? But because the Greeke Preposition here vsed, is not properly referred to the partie, which is the doer, there are some, which expound it thus, wisdom is discharged of her children so that now shee is not by any law bound vnto them, as if the inheritance were translated to some other: as Paul sayth, that Christ was iustified or freed from sinne, Rom. 6. 7. because the curse of sin had no further power ouer him. Some vsing a greater libertie interpret it more hardly, as that wisdom should be estranged from her children. But howsoeuer the Greeke Preposition be heere interpreted, in my iudgement an other sense is more apt: wisdom though her owne children doe vtterly despise her, doth yet loose nothing of her excellencie and dignitie: but remaineth sound. The Iewes, and especially the scribes vaunted themselues to bee the children of the wisdom of God: yet when they trod their mother vnder feete, they did not onely flatter themselues in so great sacriledge, but in their iudgement they would that Christ should also haue fallen: on the other side Christ sayth, though wisdom hath wicked and degenerate children, yet shee remaineth safe, and her credite and authoritie cannot bee ought impayred by their malice, which doe wickedly and maliciously slander her. But I haue not yet set downe that sense, which in my iudgement doth best agree with the place. and is most naturall. First, in the wordes of Christ there is a secret Antithesis, betweene naturall children and bastardes, which vaunt of a vaine title without a cause: as if Christ should say: let them goe on in their pride, which gloriously boast themselues to be wisdomes children in vaine shee shall yet haue her prayse and her authoritie amongst her naturall children. Therefore Luke addeth this vniuersall note *of all her children*, whereby hee declareth that the resistance of the Scribes was not such a let to any, but that all the elect of God should remaine in the faith of the Gospell. For the Greeke Preposition, it is not to be doubted but that the same word is sometime diuersly vsed. As to omit many examples, when Christ saith, Luke, 17. 25. The Son of man must first suffer many things, & be reprooued of this generatiō. No man will denie but that there is the like maner of speaking vsed in the Greeke, in the other clause. Chrysostome also, whose naturall language was the Greek tongue passeth by this, as a matter of no waight. And besides this, this sentence shall thus better agree and answere to the former sentence, where it is said, that God was iustified of the people. Therefore though many Apostates doe fall awaye from the Church of God: yet alwaies shall the faith of the Gospell continue safe amongst all the elect, which are indeede of the flocke.

Matthew.

Marke

Luke, 10.

1. After these things, the Lord appointed other seuentie also, and sent them, two and two before him

him into euery citie and place, whither hee himselfe would come.

2. And he sayd vnto them: The haruest is great, but the labourers are few: pray therefore the Lord of the haruest to send forth labourers into his haruest.

3. Goe your wayes: behold I send you forth as lambes among wolues.

4. Beare no bag, neither scrip, nor shooes, and salute no man by the way.

5. And into what soeuer house yee enter, first say Peace be to this house.

6. And if the sonne of peace bee there, your peace shall rest vpon him: if not, it shall turne to you againe.

7. And in that house tarrye still, eating and drinking such thinges, as by them shall bee set before you for the labourer is worthy of his wages, Goe not from house to house.

8. But into whatsoeuer citie yee shall enter, if they receiue you, eate such thinges as are set before you.

9. And heale the sicke that are there, and say vnto them. The kingdome of God is come neere vnto you.

10. But into whatsoeuer citie yee shall enter, if they will not receiue you, goe your wayes out into the streetes of the same, and say,

11. Euen the very dust, which cleaueth on vs of your citie, wee wipe of against you: notwithstanding, knowe this, that the kingdome of God was come neere vnto you.

12. For I say to you, that it shall be easier in that day for them of Sodom then for that citie.

1. After these thinges. It may bee gathered by many circumstances that the Apostles were turned backe againe to Christe, before that these seuentie were substituted in their roomes. For the twelue were sent to stirre vp the Iewes in hope of the saluation at hand: after their return when there was neede of more diligent attentione, there were moe sent out as second messengers, which shoulde euery where in all places spread abroad the fame of the comming of Christ. But there was no speciaall ambassage committed to them, Christ onely sent them before him, as forrunners, which might prepare the mundes of the people to receiue his doctrine.

In the number of seuentie hee seemeth to follow that order whereto the people had heeretofore beene accustomed. That must be remembred, which wee spake of the twelue Apostles, that looke how many tribes there were in the flourishing estate of the people, so many Apostles were there chosen as Patriarches, which shoulde gather the members of the torne bodie together.

ther that thence might come a perfect restitution of the Church. The reason was not unlike in the seuentie. We know when Moses was not able to beare the burden, hee chose vnto him seuentie Iudges, which should gouerne the people together with him, Num. 11. But the Iewes being now returned from the captiuitie of Babylon, had a counsell called *synedrion*, which they through corruption called *sanedrion*, which consisteth of seuentie and two Iudges. But as the common speech is in such numbers: so when they spake of the *synedrion*, they onely called them seuentie Iudges, and they were chosen of the posteritie of Dauid, as Philo witnesseth, that there might yet remaine some authoritie in the kingly stocke. Wherefore after many miserable murders, this was the last part of their destruction, when Herod had ouerthrowne that counsell, hee spoyled the people of their lawfull gouernement. Furthermore, because their returne from Babylon, was a figure of the true and perfect redemption, the Lord nowe seemeth to chuse these seuentie preachers of his comming, thereby to promise after a sort, a restitution of their decayed estate: Yet hee made them not iudges with power, because the people was to be called backe againe to one head, but hee commanded them onely to goe before, that he alone might rule and gouerne. In that he sent them two together, it seemeth that hee did it in consideration of their weakenes: for it was to be feared, least they being seuered alone should haue had lesse courage then was necessary for the through performance of their office: Therefore that some should mutually encourage others, they are sent two together.

2. *The harvest is great.* I expounded this sentence in the 9. Chap. after Matthew: yet it was conuenient to be set downe heere againe: because it is heere vttered vpon an other occasion. For that Christ might thereby the better stirre vp his Disciples diligently to apply their labour, he telleth them that the harvest is great: whereof it followeth that their labour should not be in vaine, but that they should finde abondance of matter, wherein they might exercise themselves. After he admonisheth them of dangers, contentions and troubles, and he commandeth them to girde vpp themselves, that they might speedely goe through all Iudea: then hee rehearseth those commandements, which he had giuen to the Apostles: therefore it were superfluous heere to load the readers with moe wordes, sith the full exposition of all these things may bee had there: onely they are to be admonished what this speech meaneth, *Salute no man by the way.* It is a token of great hast, where as if any man meete vs in the way, we goe forward, and speake not to him, that might hinder vs, though it were but a little. So 2. Reg. 4. 29. when Elizeus sent his boy to the Sunamite, he forbade him to salute any by the way. Would Christ therefore haue his Disciples to be so vnkind, that he would not allow them to salute any by the way? No, but hee commandeth them to make speede, that they should passe ouer all lets. Luke also hath this onely, that the Disciples shoulde eate and drinke those things, which shoulde bee set before them. In which wordes Christ doeth not onely command his to bee content with common and meane diet: but hee also alloweth them to eate of other mens charges. And this is the simple & naturall sense, it shall bee free for you to liue of other mens charges, so long as you shall bee in this iourney: for it is meete that they, for whose cause you labour

labour should giue you foode. Some thinke that that scruple is taken away, that the Disciples should not abhorre or refuse any kind of meat. but Christe meant no such thing: nay, his purpose was not to giue them any thing in commandement concerning frugall diet: but onely to grant them in stead of reward to be fed in this their ambassage of their hostes that entertayned them.

Mathew. 11.

20. Then beganne he to vpb-rayde the Cities wherein moste of his great workes were done, because they repented not.

21. Woe bee to thee, Choraazin: woe bee to thee Bethsaida: for if the great workes, which were done in you, had beene done in Tyrus and Sydon, they had repented long agoe in sackcloath and ashes.

22. But I say vnto you, it shall be easer for Tyrus and Sidon at the day of iudgement then for you.

23. And thou Capernaum, which art lyfted vp vnto heauen, shalt bee brought down to hell: for if the great workes, which haue bene don in thee had beene doone among them of Sodome, they had remained to this day.

24. But I say vnto you, that it shall be easer for them of the lande of Sodome in the day of iudgement, then for you.

Marke.

Luke. 10.

13. Woe beeto thee Chorazin: woe be to thee Bethsaida: for if the miracles had bene done in Tyrus & Sidon, which haue bene don in you, they had a great while agoe repented, sitting in sackcloath and ashes.

14. Therefore it shall bee easer for Tyrus and Sidon at the iudgement, then for you.

15. And thou Capernaum which art exalted to heauen, shalt be thrust downe to hel.

16. Hee that heareth you, heareth me: and he that despiseth you, despiseth mee: and hee that despiseth mee, despiseth him that sent me.

- 20. Then he began to vpbraid. Luke sheweth when and wherefore Christ so inueighed against these cities: namely, when he had sent his Disciples into diuerse parties of Iudea, to preach as they went that the kingdome of God was at hand: he considering their vnthankfullnes amongst whom he had laboured as a Prophet long time, and had wrought many miracles, and they not profiting thereby: he brake out into these words, as if he should haue sayd, that the time was now come that he would goe to other cities, sith he found that the inhabitants of that coaste, where hee began to preach the Gospell and to worke miracles, were a stubborne and malicious people. But not speaking of his doctrine, hee vpbraideth them, that they were not drawne to repentance by his miracles: for it is euident that the Lord shewed his power by miracles: to this end, that hee might thereby call men vnto him, and sith that by nature all men are set against him, it is necessary that they beegin at repentaunce. It is well knowne that Choraazin and Bethsaida are cities situated vpon the shore side of the lake Genazareth.

21. *If the great workes which were done in you had bene done in Tyrus and Sydon.* Christ of purpose brought this comparison of Tyrus and Sydon, because they were infamous in wickednes, pride, luxurioufnes, and other finnes, and euen their neighbours hard by them, that hee might pricke his countriemen, the Iewes, the rather. For there were none of these, which accounted not the Tyrians and Sydonians for most wicked contemptners of God. I therefore Christe amplifieth his curse the more, when hee sayth, that there was more hope of a-mendment in those places (where there was no religion) then appeared in Iu-da it selfe. But least any should moue curious questions of Gods secret iudge-ments, it is to be considered that the Lord applyed his words to the common capacitie of mans vnderstanding, comparing the citizens of Bethsaida and their neighbours with the Tyrians and Sydonians, hee disputeth not what God for-saw in secret counsell should become eyther of these, or of those, but what the others would haue done, as might by outward appearance be gathered. For that those cities were so corrupt in manners, and dissolute in behauiour, might bee imputed to their ignorance, that the word of God was neuer heard there, neither had they by miracles that calling to repentance: but the cities of Galile reproued by our Sauour, were hardened in obstinacie, as appea-reth by contemning the miracles, which they had seene wrought abundantly amongst them, without any profit. In summe, the wordes of Christ tende to this purpose, that Chorazin and Bethsaida excell Tyre and Sydon in ma-lice and ourazious contempt of G O D: and yet there is no cause to con-tend with God for passing by them, in whom there was more hope, and shew-ed his power amongst the wickedest, and them that were past hope: Whom-foeuer hee employed not his mercie vpon, hee iustly appoynteth to destru-ction.

Now, if hee withdraw his worde from some, and suffer them to perish: but that others may be more inexcusable, and that he sollicite and exhort them to repentance, by this or by any other meanes: who can therefore charge him of ill dealing? Therefore acknowledging our owne infirmitie, let vs learne humbly to reuerence this high misterie. For their proud & arrogant frowardnes is not to be borne with, which cannot abide that God should be accounted righteous, further then their senses can reach vnto: and they proudly refuse the mysteries of God, which of dutie they should reuerence: because it agreeth not with their reason.

If these great workes had bene done. Wee sayd, that wee are by these wordes taught the right vse of miracles, yet in these great workes is also comprehended the doctrine. For it is not to bee thought that Christ held his peace, while hee shewed the power of his father: nay, the miracles were annexed to the Gospell to make them more attentiu to the wordes of Christ.

In sackcloth and ashes. Repentance is heere described by the outwarde signes, which then were solemnly vsed in the Church of G O D: not that Christe esteemed these outwarde rites, but because hee applyed himselfe to the capaciti: of the common people. Wee knowe that the repentance of the faithfull is not tyed to a fewe dayes, but they must dayly exercise themselves in meditating thereof vnto their death. But it is not necessary

to put on sackcloth, and to bee sprinkled with ashes euery day : therefore this outward shewe of repentance is not alwayes to bee vsed, but when that from some greiuous falling away men turne againe to GOD. And then sackcloth and ashes are shewes of guiltines : vsed to appease the wrath of the iudge, and doe properly belong to the beginning of conuersion. And sith that men do testifie their sorrow and their grieve by this outward ceremonie, it is necessarie that the hatred of sinne, the feare of GOD, and the mortification of the fleshe should goe before, according to that saying of Ioel, 2. 13. Rent your hearts, & not your garments.

Now wee see why Christ, when hee spake of Tyre and Sydon, ioyned sackcloth and ashes to repentance : whose inhabitants could not haue the Gospell preached vnto them : but he condemneth their former life, leauing them no refuge, but to flye to a sorrowfull shew of their guiltines, and humbly to seeke for forgiveness. To the same purpose also may the word *Sitting* be applyed : for it signifieth a lying prostrate vpon the ground, which men forlorne doe vse to testifie and shew their mourning, as appeareth in many places of the Prophets.

33. *And thou Capernaum.* Hee nameth Capernaum especially, because he was so much conuersant there, that men thought hee had bene borne there And this was an inestimable dignitie, that the Sonne of God should begin his kingdome and his priesthood there in that citie, and that hee had chosen it in steade of a palace and a sanctuary for him. But shee was so drcwne in her owne filthinesse, as if no drop of Gods grace had euer bene amongst them : therefore Christ pronounceth that the greater blessings of God they had, so much the more horrible punishment remayned for them. This place is diligently to be noted, that the prophaning of Gods gifts, because it is ioyned with sacriledge, shall neuer escape vnpunished. Therefore the higher a man is in dignitie, the more seuerely hee is to bee punished, if hee prophane the gifts of God bestowed vpon him : and then especially is there a horrible vengeance at hand, when wee (being enriched with the spirituall gifts of Christ) haue him and his Gospell in derision.

If they had bene done in Sodome. It is sayd before that Christe spake after the manner of men, and that hee did not shewe, as out of a heavenly Oracle, what he foresaw should haue become of the Sodomites, if a Prophet had bene sent vnto them. If this answer doe not satisfie the contentious : yet this one thing shall take away occasion of further quarrelling from them, though God had a remedie in his hand, whereby he could haue saued the Sodomites : yet he was a iust reuenger in destroying them.

LVKE. 16. *Hee that heareth you.* They are deceived, which thinke that, that is repeated heere, which wee had in *Matthewe*, 10. 40. *Hee that receiveth you, receiveth mee.* For Christe spake there of the persons, and now heere of the doctrine : that receiving pertayned to the duties of charitie : but now hee commendeth that sayth, which receiueth God in his worde. This is the summe, that the godlinesse of men is tryed by the obedience of faith : and they that refuse the Gospell, though they glory that they are great worshippers of GOD, yet they doe openly shewe a wicked contempt of him. Furthermore, the purpose of Christe is to bee considered : for whereas a great part

of the world, preposterously esteeme of the Gospell after the dignitie of men and therefore despise it, when it is brought by men of a meane and a base estate, Christ heere meeteth with this peruerse iudgement. Also sith there is that pride almost in all men, that they will hardly submit themselves to their equals, or to them, whom they contemne in respect of themselves: and God appoynteth to gouerne his Church by the ministerie of menne, and chuseth the ministers of the worde oft times out of the dregges and offscouring of the common people: it was therefore necessary for him to set forth the maiestie of the Gospell, least it should become vile: because it is vttered out of the mouth of man. This therefore is a notable commendation of the outward ministerie, that Christ sayth, what honour or reuerence soeuer is giuen to the preaching of men so that it be faithfull, that God accepteth it as imployed to himselfe. Wee may profite by this commendation two wayes: for first nothing can better encourage vs to embrace the doctrine of the Gospell, then to heare that it is a most excellent seruice of God, and a sacrifice of a sweete smelling sauour, to heare him speaking to vs by the mouth of menne, and to submit our selues with that reuerence vnto his word brought by men, as if he himselfe should descend from heauen, or should reueale his counsell by Angels. Then this established assurednes taketh all doubt from vs, when wee heare that the testimonie of our saluation witnesseth to vs by men, sent from God, is so to be received and credited, as if his owne voyce should sound from heauen. Contrariwise, to driue vs from contempt of the Gospell, hee addeth a seuerer sentence, affirming that they disdain not men, but him, and God his father, which disdain to heare his ministers, though they bee but meane men. And as the dignitie of those pastors, which sincerely and faithfully doe execute their office is highly here extold: so the pope maketh him selfe ridiculous with his shauelings, while vnder this pretence, hee would maintaine his tyranny. For it is certaine that Christ speaketh not, as if hee would resigne to men that right, which hee had receiued from his Father: but this is his onely purpose, to deliuer his Gospell from contempt: Whereof it followeth, that he transferreth not the honour due to him, to the persons of men, but onely to seeke that it bee not separated from his word. Therefore, if the Pope will bee receiued, let him bring the word for a warrant, whereby he may bee knowne to bee a minister of Christ, but so long as hee goeth on in his owne likenesse, that is, as a cheife enemy of Christes, and hauing nothing like to the Apostles, let him leaue decking himselfe with others feathers.

Mathew.

Marke

Luke. 10.

17. And the seventie turned againe with ioy, saying, Lord, euen the deuills are subdued to vs, through thy name.

18. And hee sayde vnto them, I saw Sathan lyke lightning, fall downe from heauen.

19. Behold, I giue vnto you power to tread on serpents and scorpions, and ouer all the power of the enemy, and nothing shall hurt you.

20. Neuerthelesse, in this reioyce not, that the spirits are subdued vnto you: but rather reioyce: because your names are written in heauen.

17. And the seuentie returned againe. It appeareth that the seuentie disciples did not at the first fully and perfectly beleue Christes wordes, when as they returned reioicing, as at a strange matter and a thing, not to be hoped for, that they should cast out deuilles by the power of Christe. But this authoritie was committed to them, & they had also a commandement: yet I thinke not when they went forth, but that they were perswaded that their maister had said nothing to them in vaine: yet after, when the strangenesse of the matter exceeded their opinion, they were amazed at those wonderfull sightes. But this commonly falleth out, that the faithfull doe only conceiue a certaine taste of the power of God by his word: then experience carrieth them into admiration. But what maner of ioy they had, shall more plainly appeare by Christes answer.

18. I saw Sathan. Christe leadeth his disciples from one speciall sorte to a whole generalitie: namely, that he commanded his Gospell to bee preached to this ende, that hee might ouerthrow the kingdome of Sathan. And because the disciples tooke that example, which in experience they had seene, without further application, Christe telleth them, that the force and efficacie of their doctrine should reach further, and that the tyranny which Sathan exercised against all mankind should bee ouerthrowne. Now we conceiue the meaning of the wordes, when Christ commanded his Gospell to be preached, he did not attempt a matter, the end where of was doubtfull, but hee saw before that Sathan should thereby be ouerthrowne. Now, sith the sonne of God cannot bee deceived, and this his foreknowledge belongeth to the continuall course of the Gospell: it is not to be doubted, but as oft as he raiseth vp faithfull teachers, but that he will giue like happy successe to their labours. Whereby wee gather, that we cannot be otherwise deliuered from the seruice of Sathan, but by the Gospell, then, they profit rightly by the Gospell, in whome the power of Sathan falleth downe, that they dying vnto sinne, begin to liue to the righteousness of God. The similitude is also to bee noted, which he vseth, that Sathan fell downe as lightning at the thunder of the Gospell: for so is the diuine and incredible power of the doctrine expressed, which so sodainly casteth downe headlong with violence the prince of the worlde, furnished with so great powers. Heere is also expressed how miserable the condition of man was, ouer whome Sathan triumphed, who reigned in the ayre, and held the worlde subiect vnder his secte, vntill Christ the deliuerer came.

19. Beholde I giue vnto you power. This is spoken by way of agrault, Christe denieth not, but that it is an excellent gift, wherein they reioyce: but hee specially warneth them to looke somewhat deeper into the matter, and not to stay at the outward myracles. Therefore, as their ioy was not conceiued of nothing, so he doth not altogether condemne it, but sheweth that it is not such as it ought to be: because they pleased themselves too much in these outward shewes, and did not lift vp themselves to heauen. And almost all the godly are sicke of this disease: for though they consider the goodness of Gods benefits with thanksgiving: yet they go not so far with the, as they ought, as with ladders to be holpe by them to clime into heauen.

Therefore they haue neede to be raised vp by the Lord, as with an outstretched arme, to be holden, that they fall not down vpon the ground, but that they should aspyre to a heauenly newnesse of life. Hee calleth all daungers the power of the enemye: because the deuill throweth vpon vs whatsoever he knoweth may make against vs: not that he hath in his power those things, which can hurt men: but because that he being armed with the curse of God, he endeouureth to turne all his scourges to our destructiō, & taketh them as weapons to wound vs with.

20. *Your names are written.* Christe purposing to withdraw his disciples from a vaine ioy, to glory & to ioy in eternall life, he leadeth them to the headspring & fountaine of the same: namely, that they are chosen of God and adopted to be sons. He might haue commanded them to reioyce, for that they are regenerate by the spirit of God, to be new creatures in Christ, that they are lightened in the hope of saluation, & haue the seale of the same giuen vnto them: But his wil was to set down vnto them the head, fro whence all these goodthings do come: that is, the free election of God, least they shoulde ascribe any thing to themselves. The benefites of God, which we feele in our selues, do giue vs occasiō to prayse God: but the eternall election, which is without vs, doeth shew more plainly, that the mere goodnes of God is the foundation of our saluation. Further, he saith metaphorically, that their names are written in heauen, meaning they are accounted before God, as sons & heires, as if they were written in a Catalogue.

Matth. 11.

25. *At that time Iesus answered, and sayd, I giue thee thanks, O father, Lord of heauen and earth, because thou hast hidde these things from the wise, and men of vnderstanding, and haste opened them vnto babes.*

26. *It is so, O father: because thy good pleasure was such.*

27. *All things are giuen vnto mee of my father: and no manne knoweth the sonne, but the father: neyther knoweth any manne the father, but the sonne, and he to whome the sonne will reueale him.*

28. *Come vnto mee all yee that are weary and laden, and I wil ease you.*

29. *Take my yoke on you, and learne of mee, that I am meeke and lowly in heart: and yee shall finde rest vnto your soules.*

30. *For my yoke is easie, and my burden is light.*

Marke.

21. *That same houre reioyced Iesus in the spirite, and sayde: I confesse to thee father, Lord of heauen & earth, that thou hast hidde these things from the wise & learned, and haste reuealed them to babes, euen so father, because it pleased thee.*

22. *Then hee turned to his disciples and sayde, All thinges are giuen to mee of my father: and no manne knoweth who the sonne is, but the father: neyther who the father is, saue the sonne, and he to whome the sonne will reueale him.*

Luke. 10.

25. *Iesus answered.* Though the Hebrews doe commonly vse this worde answering, euen in the beginning of a matter or speache, yet I thinke that in this place there is a greater Emphasis, and that Christ tooke occasion of the present matter to speake thus: and Lukes wordes doe more plainly confirme it, in that he saith, that Christ the same houre reioyced in the spirite. But whereof should this reioycing proceede: but that Christ esteemed the Church gathered of meane and contemptible men, as deare and as precious to him, as if all the nobilitie and excellencie of the worlde had beene gathered with their glorious shewes into the same? And the words, which hee speaketh to his father, haue more vehemencie in them, then those words which hee speaketh to his disciples. Though it is certaine that in respect of them, and for their cause he gaue thanks to the Father, least any should be offended with the meane and base estate of the Church. For wee doe alwayes seeke after glorious shewes, and nothing seemeth more vnlike he to vs, then that the heauenly kingdome of the Sonne of God, whose beautie is so gloriously described by the Prophets, should consist of the dregges and offscouring of the people. And surely wonderfull is the counsell of the Lord in this, that he hauing the whole worlde in his hand, had rather chuse a peculiar people to himselfe out of the meane despised common people then from amongst the mightie men of the world, which might haue the better beautified and adorned the name of Christ with their nobilitie. But Christe heere withdraweth his disciples from a proud and disdainfull iudgement, least they should be so bolde as to despise the meane and base estate of the Church, wherein he himselfe delighteth and reioycest. But, that he may with more force ouerthrow and ouerwhelme the curiositie, which heereof ariseth in the mindes of men, he listeth vp himselfe about the world, & reuerenceth the secret iudgements of God, that he might drawe other with him to haue the same in admiration. And truly, though this order of God farre differeth from our iudgement, yet too madde, arrogant and blind are wee, if wee once murmure when Christ our head doeth reuerently accept and account of the same. But now it is conuenient to weigh the wordes, *I giue thee thanks, O Father.* In these wordes hee declareth that hee fettereth himselfe in that decree of his father, which differeth so much from the iudgement of the world. There is also containd vnder these wordes a secret opposition betwene this prayle, which hee giueth to his Father, and the malicious slaunders, or frowarde barkings of the world.

Now it is to bee considered, wherefore he thanketh his father: namely, because that he being Lord of the whole worlde preferred the babes and simple ones before the men of vnderstanding. For in respect of the circumstance of the argument, it is of no small force, that hee calleth his Father, Lord of heauen & earth. For in these words hee sheweth that this difference onely dependeth of the will of GOD, that the wise are blinde, and that the rude and vnlearned doe vnderstand the mysteries of the Gospell. There are many other like places, wherein the Lord sheweth that they are all freely chosen by him, which attayne to saluation: because that hee is the maker and creator of the world, and that all nations are his. Further, wee learne by this sentence two things: first, that it is not for want of power in GOD, that all doe not obey the

the Gospell: for hee is able to subdue all creatures to his power. Secondly, it is onely by the worke of his free election, that some become faithfull, & others remaine ignorant and obstinate: for hee drawing some, and passing by other some, doth onely make the difference betweene men: whose estate by nature is one and equall: Yet in that he chose the simple rather then the wise, hee had consideration of his owne glory.

For, as flesh is alwayes too proud: so if wise and learned men should go before, this opinion would presently take place, that men obtayned faith by dexterity, or by wisdom, or by learning. Wherefore the mercie of God could not otherwise be so manifest, as it deserueth: but by making such a choyce, as might plainly declare, that whatsoever menne bring of themselves is nothing worth. Therefore it is meete that the wisdom of man should be ouerthrowne least it should obscure the praise of Gods grace. Yet it is further demanded, who Christ calleth men of vnderstanding, and whom he calleth little ones. For experience teacheth vs, that all the rude and simple haue not faith, nor all the wise and learned are left in their blindness. Therefore they are accounted the wise and men of vnderstanding, which being lift vp with a deuillish pride cannot abide to heare Christ speaking from heauen. And that this is not a general rule that all they are forsaken of God, which in pride delight in themselves more then they ought, wee are taught by the example of Paule whose pride Christe tamed: yea, if wee descend to the rude common people, as the greater parte of them appeare to be full of deadly malice, so wee see them left together with the great and mightie men to their owne destruction. I grant that all vnbeleeuers are puffed vp with a vaine trust of themselves, whether they apply themselves to be accounted wise, honest, honourable, or rich: yet I doe thinke that Christe doth heere simply comprehend all that doe excell in wisdom and learning, without noting of the fault: as againe he accounteth them not in respect of vertues to be little ones: for though Christ is maister of the lowly, and that this is the first rudiment of faith, that no man should be wise in his owne conceit: yet hee speaketh not here of wilfull wickednesse: but Christ by this reason amplifieth the louing mercie of the father, who disdained not to descend to the lowest and vilest places, that he might raise the poore out of the myre. But heere ariseth a question, sith that wisdom is a gift of God, howe cometh it to passe that it should hinder vs from seeing the light of God, which shineth in the Gospell. That must be remembered, which I sayde euen now, that the vnfaithfull doe defile whatsoever vnderstanding is giuen them: and therefore excellent wits are often hindered, that they cannot submit themselves to be taught.

But, concerning this present place, I answer, though wisdom bee no light to the wise, yet they may be deprived of the light of the Gospell. For, sith that all menne were in one the same, and like condition, why should not GOD at his pleasure take these or those? And why hee chose not the wise and mightie, Paule teacheth vs, 1. Corinthians. 1. 27 namely, that hee chose the weake and foolish things of the world, that hee might confound the glorious pride of flesh. But, wee doe note againe, that Christes speech was not generall, where hee sayde, that the misteries

of the Gospell were hidd from the wise. For, if of five menne of vnderstanding foure refuse the Gospell, one receiue it, of so many simple menne, two or three become the disciples of Christe, this sentence is fulfilled: which is also confirmed by that place of Paule, which I euen now rehearsed: for he banisheth not all that are wise, noble and mighty out of the kingdome of God, but only sheweth that not many of them shall be sau'd.

Now is the question answered, that wisdom is not here condemned, as it is the gifte of GOD, but Christe onely sayeth, that it is of no value to the obtaining of sayth, as againe he commendeth not foolishnesse, as though menne were thereby reconciled to God: but he denyeth it to be any hindrance to his mercy: but that notwithstanding hee might lighten the rude and simple men with heavenly wisdom. Now it remaineth to declare, what to reueale, and to keepe secreete meaneth. That Christ speaketh not of outward preaching may be gathered by this, that hee offereth himselfe generally a teacher to all menne, and gave the same commaundement to his Apostles. Wherefore this is the meaning, no manne can attaine sayth by his owne wisdom, but onely by the secret lightning of the spirit of God.

26. *It is so, O Father.* This sentence taketh from vs the occasion of vaine and wanton inquiringe, which ofte prouoketh and stirreth vs. For God requirith no harder a matter of vs, then that wee shoulde account his will for a perfect reason and righteousnesse. Hee doth ofte rehearse that his iudgements are as a great bottomles depth: yet wil we run headlong with violence into that depth: and if wee finde ought that please vs not, we grudge and murmur against him: and many breake out into open blasphemies. But the Lorde hath prescribed this rule vnto vs, that wee shoulde account that to bee right, which pleaseth GOD. And this is to bee wise, as wee ought to bee, to esteeme of the one good pleasure of God, as of a thousand reasons. Christe coulde haue alledged the causes of this difference, if their hadde beene any: but being satisfied with the good pleasure of GOD, hee enquireth no further why hee calleth the little ones to saluation rather then others, and framed his kingdome of the obscure common people. Whereby it appeareth that they rage against Christe, which grudge when they heare that some are chesen freely of the good will of GOD, and that other some are forsaken: for it greueth them to giue place vnto God.

27. *All things are giuen to mee of my Father.* The interpreters doe yll apply this sentence with the former, which thinke that the onely purpose of it is, that Christe should encourage his Disciples with greater boldnesse to the preaching of the Gospell. But I thinke that Christe spake it for another cause, and to an other end. For, as he saide before, that the Church came out of the secret fountaine of Gods free election: so now hee sheweth how that grace of saluation cometh vnto men. For many, when they heare that none other are heires of eternall life, but those whom GOD chose before the worlde was made, they doe curiously enquire how they may be certaine of Gods secreete counsell: and so they cast themselves into a laborinth, out of the which they canne finde no passage. But Christ commaundeth to come presently

to him, that the certaintie of saluation may bee fetched from thence. The meaning therefore is, that life is reuealed to vs in Christe himselfe: and therefore that no man can be partaker of the same, but he that entred in by the gate of faith.

Now wee see how he ioyneth sayth with the eternall predestination of God, which foolish men doe so pecuiously compare together, as if they were contraries. For though our saluation be alwayes hidde with God: yet Christe is the conduit pipe whereby it commeth to vs, and is by sayth receiued of vs, that it may bee confirmed and ratified in our heartes. Wherefore it is not lawfull to shrinke from Christe, except we will refuse the saluation prepared for vs. *No man knoweth the sonne.* He speaketh this for this cause, least his maiestie shoulde vainely be esteemed of, after the iudgement of men. The meaning thereof is, that if wee will know what Christe is, wee must credit the testimony of the father, who onely can tell vs truly and rightly what he hath giuen vnto vs in him. And certainly by imagining him to be such a one, as our minde in the imagination thereof conceiue, wee spoyle him of a great parte of his power: therefore he is not knowne rightly, but by the fathers voyce, though the onely voyce sufficeth not without the direction of the spirite: for the power of Christe is so deepe and secrete, that men cannot reach vnto the same, vntill they bee lightened of the father. Note therefore that the father knoweth him not for himselfe, but for vs, that he might reueale him vnto vs: yet the sentence seemeth not to be full: because the two partes of it agree not together.

It is said of the sonne, that no man knoweth the father but he, & he to whom he will reueale him: but of the father this onely is saide, that he onely knoweth the Sonne: but there is no mention made that he shoulde reueale. I answere, it should haue beene in vaine to haue rehearsed that, which hee had spoken but now. For what doth the former thanksgiving containe, but that the father hath reuealed the Sonne, to whom he hath thought good. Therefore that which followeth now, *that no man knew the sonne, but the father*, is as a reason rendred of that hee hadde spoke: for this imagination might haue risen: what neede was it that the father shoulde reueale the sonne, who hath shewed himselfe to bee seene openly? Now, that wee vnderstand wherefore it is sayde that the sonne was knowne of the father alone: it remaineth that wee should consider the latter part of the sentence: That no man knoweth the father, but the sonne. Also this knowledge differeth from the former: for it is not sayde, that the sonne knewe the father, because hee shoulde reueale him by his spirite: but in that hee was the lively image of the father, hee sheweth him visibly after a sorte in his owne person. Yet I exclude not the spirit, but I referre the reuealing, whereof Christe now speaketh, to the manner of the knowledge, and so the text agreeth well together: for Christe confirmeth that, which hee saide before, that all things were giuen vnto him of the father, that wee might knowe that the fulnesse of the God-head dwelte in him. This is the summe, it is the gift of the Father, that the Sonne is knowne: for hee openeth the eyes of our mindes by his spirite, wherein wee see the glory of Christe, which otherwise was hidden from vs: but the father

father who dwelleth in light, whereto no man can reach, and is incomprehensible in himselfe, is reuealed vnto vs by the son, who is the liuely image, so that hee is sought eke where in vaine.

28. Come vnto mee all ye. Now he doeth louingly call vnto him them, that hee acknowledgeth to be fitte to be his disciples. For though hee be ready to reueale his father to all, yet the most part neglecteth to come, because they are not touched with the feeling of their wantes. Hypocrites care not for Christe, because they being drunke with their owne righteousnesse, neither hunger nor thirst for his grace. They that are giuen to the worlde, make no account of the heauenly life: therefore Christe should call those two sortes of people to him in vaine. he turneth therefore himselfe to the miserable & to the afflicted. Also he calleth them that labour & mourne vnder the burden: neither doth he generally meane all the that are oppressed with sorrow & griefes, but them which being confounded in their own sins, and stricken with the feare of Gods wrath, are ready to fall down vnder so great a burden. God humbleth his elect diuers waies: but because the most part of men oppressed with miseries, do yet remaine stubborn & vntamed, Christ meaneth by men weary & loaden, the that haue their consciences afflicted with the guiltines of eternall death, and are prickt so inwardly with their own miseries that they faint. for this feeblenes maketh vs apt to receiue his grace. For it is as if he should haue said, that his grace is therefore contemned of the most part, because few do feele their owne want: yet there is no cause why their pride or obstinacie, shoulde hinder afflicted consciences which sigh for remedy. Wherefore let vs leaue all the which are bewitched with the sleights of Satan, and do either perswade themselves to haue righteousness without Christ, or els do imagine themselves to be blessed in this world. Our miseries do driue vs to seeke after Christ. And because Christ admitteth none to the enioying of his rest, but them that faint vnder the burden, let vs learne that there is not a more deadly poyson, then that sluggishnes which planteth in vs a false & deceitfull opinion either of an earthly felicitie, or of righteousnesse and vertue: therefore let every one of vs daily stirre vp our selues, & first let vs busie our selues to shake off the delights of the world: then let vs empty our selues of all vaine trust in our selues. But though this preparation to receiue the grace of Christ doeth discourage men: yet it is to bee noted that it is the gift of the holy Ghost: because it is the beginning of repentance, whereto no man can attaine of himselfe. Neither is it the purpose of christ to teach what man can do of himselfe, but onely how they ought to be affected which come vnto him. They which restrain this burden and this labour to the ceremonies of the law, doe tie the sentence of Christ too short. I graunt that the burden of the lawe is intolerable, and that it would ouerwhelme soules: but that must be reembered which I said, that Christ reacheth out his hand to all that be afflicted, that hee might make a difference betweene disciples and contempters of the Gospel. But that generall speech of Christe is to bee noted: for Christe doth therefore without exception comprehend all that labour, and are laden, least any man through faithlesse doubting, shoulde flutte vp the way against himselfe. And yet all they are but few in number: because that of that innumerable company of them that are about to perish, fewe feele themselves going to destruction.

The refreshing which Christe promisseth, consisteth in the free forgiveness of sinnes, which onely easeth vs.

19. *Take my yoaके on you.* Because wee see that many doe abuse the grace of Christ, while they turne it to serue the wantonnesse of the flesh: therefore after Christ hath promised ioyfull rest to the miserable afflicted consciences hee also warneth them that he is a deliuerer vpon this condition, that they shoulde take his yoaके on them: as if he shoulde haue sayd, that he did not therefore free the from sins, that they hauing God mercifull to them, should therby take a liberty to sinne: but that they being comforted by his grace, should take on them a yoaके, & that they being freed in conscience, they might keepe in bondage the wantonnesse of the flesh. And hereof is gathered a definitiō of that rest wherof he spake: that is, it freeth not the disciples of Christe from the warfare of the crosse, that they should liue pleasantly, but it exerciseth the vnder the burden of discipline, & containeth them vnder the yoaके. *Learn of me.* They are in my iudgement, deceived, which thinke that christ spake here of his meekenes, least his disciples (as the coming of mighty men is wont to be feareful) because of his diuine glory, should flie from him. For he rather frameth vs to follow him, because that by reason of the stubbornnesse of the flesh, wee flie the yoaके as a sharpe and a hard thing. A little after he sayeth that his yoaके is sweete: but how can it bee that any man shoulde submit his necke willingly and ioyfully, except hee being cloathed wth meekenes, he becōmeth like to Christ? Further, it appeareth that this is the meaning: Christe exhorteth his disciples to beare his yoaके, least the difficultie should terrifie them, he addeth presently after, *learn ye of me*, signifying that that yoaके should not be grieuous vnto vs, when we are by his own example taught and framed to meekenesse and humilitie. That also pertaineth to the same purpose, that he addeth, *ye shall finde rest*. So long as the flesh is at liberty wee murmur: but they which refuse the yoaके of Christ, and endeavour to please God another way, they doe weary and tire themselves in vaine: As we see the Papists doe vexe themselves miserably, and they beare a cruell tyranny, vnder the which they are tormented, yet with silence they passe it ouer, least they should become subiect to the crosse of Christ.

Matth. 12.

1. At that time Iesus went on a Sabbath day through the corne, and his disciples were an hungred and beganne to plucke the eares of corne to eate.

2. And when the pharises saw it, they saide vnto him: Behold, thy disciples do that which is not lawfull to do vpon the Sabbath.

3. But he saide vnto them: haue ye not read what David did when he was an hungred, and they that were with him?

4. How he entred into the house of

Marke. 2.

23. And it came to passe as hee went through the corne, on the Sabbath day, that his disciples, as they were on their way, began to pluck & eate of corne. 24. And the pharises said vnto him: Beholde, why do they on the Sabbath day, that which is not lawfull? 25. And he said vnto them: haue ye neuerred what David did, when he had need & was an hungred both hee & they that were with him?

26. How

Luke. 6.

1. And it came to passe on the second Sabbath, after the first, that he went through the corne fieldes, & his disciples plucked the eares of corne, & did eate & rub them in their hands. 2. And certaine of the pharises said to them why do yee that which is not lawfull to doe on the Sabbath day?

3. Then Iesus answered them, and sayde: haue yee

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of God, and ate the shewe bread which was not lawfull for him, to eate, neither for them that were with him, but only for the priestes? 5. Or haue ye not read in the law, howe that on the Sabboth dayes, the Priestes in the Temple breake the Sabboth, and are blamelesse? 6. But I say vnto you, that here is one greater then the Temple. 7. Wherefore if yee knewe what this is, I will haue mercie and not sacrifice, yee would not haue condemned the innocents. 8. For the Sonne of man is Lord euen of the Sabboth.

26. Howe hee went into the house of God, in the dayes of Abiathar the high priest, and did eate the shew bread, which was not lawfull to eate: but for the priestes, and gaue also to them which were with him. 27. And hee said to them: the Sabboth was made for man, and not man for the Sabboth. 28. Wherefore the Sonne of man is Lord, euen of the Sabboth.

not read this, that David did when he him selfe was an hungred and they which were with him. 4. How he went into the house of God, and tooke & eate the shewe bread, & gaue also to them which were with him which was not lawfull to eat, but for the priestes onely. 5. And he said vnto them the Son of man is Lord also of the sabboth day.

1. Iesus went on a Sabboth. The purpose of the Euangelistes in this historie was to shew, partly how malicious the Pharise were, and partly how superstitiously they were addicted to outwarde rites of small importance, in so much that they set all their holines in them. For they accuse the Disciples of Christe, because that they being an hungred in their iournie, did pull eares on the Sabboth day, as if they had so broken the Sabboth. The obseruation of the Sabboth was an holy exercise, but not as they imagined it, that one could scarce moue his finger, but with a trembling conscience. Hypocrisie made them so scrupulous in so light matters, when as they beare with themselves in grosse superstitions: as Christ in an other place vpbraideth them, that they tithed Mints and Anisfeedes, but contemned the greater matters of the law. And this is alwayes the custome of hypocrites, to take libertie to themselves in great matters, and to be diligent in obseruing of ceremonies. And this is the matter why they are so straight in looking to the obseruing of outward rites, because they thinke that God is onely pleased with a carnall worship. But this reprehension came rather of malice and enuie, then of superstition. for they were not so capricious against others. And it is meete that we should consider how they were affected, least it should amaze any man to see that Christ had the doctors of the law so much his enemies.

L V. 1. On the second Sabboth, after the first. It is not to be doubted but that this Sabboth belonged to some one of the feast daies, which the law commanded to be celebrated once euery yeare: therefore some thought that the feast continued for the space of 2. dayes: but because that after the captivity of Babylon, the Iewes so deuided their feasts, that there was alwayes a day between that opinion is confuted. They speake more probably which say that it was the last day of the solemnization, which was as much esteemed as the first. Yet I like their iudgement better, which take it to be the second feast of the yeare. & the name agreeth very wel to be called the second sabboth after the first, because that in order of time it was the second of those high and yearly feasts. The first was the Pascheouer, therefore it is probable that this was the feast of the first fruits

Mar. 24. Why do they on the sabboth day. The Pharises reprove not the disciples of

of Christ, for pulling eares of corne in an other mans field, but because they breake the Sabbath. As though the Sabbath had bin ordained to this end, that hungry men should perith: rather then they should relieue their hunger. But this was the onely cause of the Sabbath, that the people sanctifying themselves to God, should exercise themselves in true & spirituall worship: then that they being freed from all worldly busines, might the better frequent the holy assemblies. Wherefore the lawfull obseruation of it must be referred to this purpose: for the interpretation of the law must bee fetched from the mind of the lawgiver. But heereby appeareth how malicious and oblitrate superstition is: especially you may see how disdainfully and cruelly hypocrites do lift vp themselves where ambition and hatred of the person doe meete together for not onely the affecting of fained holinesse as I layd before, made the Pharisees so sharpe and so cruell. But such that of purpose they desired to carpe at all the words and deeds of Christ, it cannot be but that they should draw those things into the ill part, wherein there was no fault, as all malicious interpreters doe. There is no contradiction in this, that Matthew and Marke say, that the fault was layde vpon the Lord, and Luke, vpon the Disciples. For it is probable that the Disciples were so troubled, that the accusation was brought against the matter himselfe. Also, it may be that the quarell being first layd against the Disciples, came at length to Christ himselfe, and that the Pharisees prouoked by malice, layde the fault vpon him, that he did suffer his disciples to breake the Sabbath, and he yet held his peace at it.

M A T. 3. *Haue yee not read what Dauid did.* Christ confuteth their cauill by five arguments. First hee excuseth his Disciples by the example of Dauid, 1. Sam. 21. 6. for Dauid flying the wrath of Saule, when hee asked vitayles of Ahimelech the Priest, who had no common bread, hee obtayned this fauour, that he shew bread was giuen him. If necessitie freed Dauid from faulte, the same reason may be of force for others. Whereof it followeth that the ceremonies of the law are not defiled, so that godlines be not hurt. Christ taketh it as granted, that Dauid was without fault: because the Priest which gaue him leaue to take that shew bread, is commended by the holy Ghost. When he saith that it was not lawfull but for the Priests onely, Exod. 29. 32. to eate that bread, the meaning is by the common law: for if Dauid had in this attempted any thinge vnlawfull, Christ had brought forth his example in vaine, but necessitie made that lawfull, which was forbidden for a certaine ende.

5. *How the Priests on the Sabbath dayes.* The second argument whereby Christ proueth that the breach of the Sabbath whereof the Pharisees complayned, is void of offence, is this: because it is lawfull on the Sabbath dayes to kill sacrifices, to circumsise infants, and to doe all other things that pertaine to the worship of God. Whereof it followeth that the works of godlinesse cannot bee contrary one to the other: for if the temple doth sanctifie the handy labours imployed about the sacrifices and the other outward worshippings: the holinesse of the true and spirituall Temple is greater, to purge their worshippers from all fault whil they apply the works of godlinesse. Also the disciples applied themselves to offer vp their soules consecrated to God by the Gospell. Matthew only toucheth this argument. Now that hee sayth that the Sabbath was broken by the priests,

priests, is an vnproper maner of speach which Christ vseth, that he may frame himselfe to the hearers. For when the law commandeth men to abstaine from their workes, it doth not forbid men from religious exercises: for Christ granteth that to be true, which might but seeme to be so to the common people, hauing enough that the workes of the temple offend not God.

7. *If yee knewe what this is.* Matthew only maketh mention of the third argument. Christe reprocueth the pharises, because they considered not for what purpose the ceremonies were commaunded, nor to what end they belonge. And truly this hath beene a common fault almost in all ages: and therefore the Prophet Oseah. 6. 7. reprocueth the menne of his age, for that they being addicte to ceremonies, made no account of the woorkes of charite, but God telleth them otherwise, that hee accounteth more of mercy then of sacrifices: By the woordes *Mercy* are noted by a figure all the workes of charitie, euen as vnder sacrifices is all the outward worships of the law comprehended. Christ applyeth the same sentence to his time, and accuseth the pharises, for that they did wickedly wrest the law of God into a contrary sence, in that they neglecting the seconde table, did apply themselues wholly to ceremonies. Yet here ariseth a question, why God sayeth that he regardeth not sacrifices, sith he commaunded in the law that they should bee straightly obserued. This may be readily answered: outward rites in respecte of themselues are not esteemed nor required of God, but in respecte of the ende where vnto they are directed. Againe God doeth not simply refuse them, but comparinge them with the woorkes of charitie, he sheweth that hee doeth lesse esteeme of them then of the other. Yet notwithstanding this, in the perfection of righteousness, the worship of God hath the chiefest place: then secondly come those dueties which belong to men. For though godlinesse of right is so much more accounted of, then charitie, as God excelleth and is aboue menne: yet because the faithfull by maintaining mutuall charitie amongst theselues, doe giue testimony that they worshippe God effectually: God doeth not without cause call the hypocrits to this, for they faine a godlinesse in outward signes, and they do wonderfully peruert the same by resting only in a carnall and outward worship. Furthermore, Christe gathereth effectually by the testimonie of the Prophet, that his disciples are guiltlesse, for God exercising his people in the rudimentes of the law, minded nothing lesse then to kill men by famine.

8. *For the sonne of man is Lord.* Some ioync this sentence with the former, there was no greater then the Temple: but I thinke them to be diuers. For Christ first alluding to the people, affirmed that to bee no breach of the law, that was annexed to the holy seruice of the same. But he sayeth here, that he hath power giuen him, to set his disciples free from the necessitie of obseruing the Sabbath. The Sonne of man (sayeth hee) can of his owne power moderate the obseruing of the Sabbath, as he doeth the other ceremonies of the law. And certainly, without Christ the bondage of the law is miserable, from the which he only freeth them whom he enricheth with the free spirit of adoption.

MAR. 27. *The Sabbath was made for manne.* This fift argument is reported by Marke onely. And this is the summe, that they doe wickedly which conuert the Sabbath to mans destruction, which God instituted for his

take. The Pharisees saw the disciples of Christ occupied in holy woorke, they saw them weary with the labour of the iourney, and also oppressed with hunger: yet they grudge that the hungry men shoulde comfort their wearied bodies with a few cornes of wheate. Is not the purpose of God wickedly peruerced in this manner, if the obseruation of the Sabbath be required with the losse of men, for whose commoditie the Lorde instituted it? But in my iudgement they are deceiued which doe thinke that the Sabbath is altogether taken away: for Christ doth only teach the right vse of the same. For though he sayd a litle before, that he was Lorde also of the Sabbath: yet the full time of abrogating the same was not come, because the vail of the temple was not yet rent.

Matth. 12.

9. And hee departed thence, and went into their synagoge.

10. And beholde, there was a manne which had his hande dryed yppe. And they asked him, sayinge: Is it lawfull to heale yppon a Sabbath day, that they might accuse him.

11. And hee sayde vnto them: what manne shall there bee amonge you, that shall haue a sheepe, and if it fall on a Sabbath daye into a pitte, will not he take it and lift it out?

12. Howe much more then is a manne better then a sheepe? Therefore it is lawfull to doe well on a Sabbath day.

13. Then sayde hee to the manne: Stretch forth thine hande. And hee stretched it forth, and it was made whole as the other.

Marke 3.

1. And he entred againe into the Synagoge, and there was a man which had a withered hande.

2. And they watched him whether he would heale him on the Sabbath daye, that they might accuse him.

3. Then he sayde vnto the man which had the withered hand: arise, stand forth in the middes.

4. And he said to them: Is it lawfull to do a good deed on the sabbath day, or to doe euill? to save the life, or to kill? but they held their peace.

5. The heloked round about on the angerly, mourninge also for the hardnes of their hearts, & said to the man: stretch forth thine hand, & he stretched it out, and his hand was restored as whole as the other.

Luke 6.

6. It came to passe also on another sabbath, that hee entered into the Synagoge &

taught, & there was a man whose right hand was dried ypp. 7. And the scribes & pharisees watched him, whether he would heale on the Sabbath day, that they might find an accusatiō against him.

8. But he knew their thoghths & said to the man which had the withred hand: arise & stand vp in the middes, and he arose & stode ypp.

9. The said Iesus vnto the, I wil aske you a questio, whether is it lawfull on the sabbath daies to doe good, or to doe euill? to saue life or to destroy it? 10. And he beheld the al in cōpasse, & said vnto the man: Stretch forth thine hand, & he did so, & his hand was restored againe.

9. And he departed thence. This history and the former, tende both to one end which is, that the Scribes were maliciously bent to carpe and cauill at euery thing that Christ did, and therefore it is no maruell, if they whose mindes were so poysoned with frowardnes, continued obstinate enemies against him. Yet wee see that this is a cōmon matter with hypocrites, to only to follow a shadow of the righteousness of the law. & as they say cōmonly, rather to be in shew then in substance. First therefore let vs learne to bring with vs, when we are to giue iudgement of any thing, pure mindes free frō all malicious affection. For if hatred or pride, or any such like thing raigne in vs, we shall not onely be iniurious to men, but with cōtempt of God himselfe, we wil turne light into darkness.

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No man voyd of malice would haue denied this to haue beene a godly worke, which these good doctours doubt not to condemne. From whence commeth this madnesse, but that all their senses were fraught with vile haerd of Christ, so that they would not see in the bright sunne shine? Wee are also warned to take heede, least by giuing to Ceremonies more then is meete, we omit those things which are of greater account before God, and which Christ Mat. 23. 23. calleth the weightier matters of the law. For wee are so bent to outward Ceremonies, that wee can neuer keepe a meane in that behalfe, except wee remember that whatsoeuer is commaunded of the worship of God ought first to bee spirituall, then, to be measured and guided by that rule which is here prescribed by Christ

10. *They asked him saying.* Marke and Luke doe onely say that they watched what the Lord would doe: but Mat. setteth it downe more plainly, that they tempted him also in words. And it is likely that hee had healed some others on the Sabbath before: hauing therefore taken occasion of that, they demaund of him whether he thinke it lawfull for him to doe againe, that he had done before. But they shoulde haue considered with themselves whether it had beene the worke of God or of man, to heale a dried hand, onely by touching it, or with a word. For God who instituted the Sabbath, laid not a law vpon himselfe, neither did he bring himselfe into any bondage, but that he might labour on the Sabbath, as he should thinke meete as vpon other dayes. Therefore it was a poynt of too great madnesse, by mouing this question to driue God himselfe in to order, and to abridge him of his free course in his workes.

11. *What man shall there be among you, that shall haue a sheepe.* Christ sheweth againe, which is the true and right obseruation of the Sabbath, and also hee reproveth them for their malicious dealing, because they cauld at him, for that which was an usuall maner amongst them all. For if any mans sheepe fell into a pit, no man did forbid the pulling of it out: and howe much more a manne is worth then a beast, so much more lawfull is it to helpe him. Therefore it appeareth that if any do helpe the necessitie of the brethren, that he breaketh not the rest commaunded by the Lord. Marke & Luke haue not this similitude. they onely say that Christ demaunded whether it was lawfull to doe a good deede on the Sabbath day, or to doe euill? for he that loseth the life of a man, is guilty of an offence: yea he little differeth from a manslayer which hath no regard to helpe him that hath neede. Therefore Christ reproveth them, that vnder the pretence of a holy rest, they would enforce them to doe euill: for not onely he doth sinne, as it is sayd, that doth any thing against the law, but he also which neglegeth his dutie. Heereby we also perceiue that Christ did not alwayes vse the same reasons, to overthrow this cauill with: for he disputeth not here of his Godhead as he doth in Iohn, neither was it needefull, for this one defence was sufficient to conuince the Pharises, for these two cannot agree that he should be accounted a breaker of the Sabbath, who should follow God.

L V 8. *But he knew their thoughts.* If Mat. say true, they did openly bewray with their speech, what they had in their mind. Therefore christ answereth not to their secret thoughts but to their open words. But both may stand, that they spake openly, & that christ iudged of their secret thoughts. Neither did they utter what they meant, as Mat. declarerh, that their demand was captious: therefore Luke meaneth

meaneth nothing else, but that Christe knewe their deceites, though they pretended an other matter in words. Marke addeth that Christ looked vpon them angerly: for he might well be angry at their wicked obstinacie. And that wee might knowe that his anger was iust and holy, hee sayeth that it sprang of this, that hee mourned for the hardnes of their hearts. First therefore Christ is sorrowfull that men exercised in the law of God, should be in such grosse ignorāce. But because that malice blinded them, hee also conceiueh anger with his sorrow. This is a right moderation of zeale, when we mourne for the destruction of wicked menne, and are angry for their vngodlines. And as this place declareth that Christ was not free from humane affection: so wee doe heereof gather that the passions themselves are not sinfull, so that a temperate meane be kept. Wee cannot hold the meane by reason of our corrupt nature, wee are neuer angry, no not for iust causes without sinne: these things were not to bee found in Christ, for not onely the integritie of nature did beare rule in him, but in him there also shone a perfect example of righteoufnesse. Therefore wee must pray that the spirite of God may be giuen vs from heauen to correct and bridle our imperfections.

Mathew. 12.

14. Then the Pharises went out, and consulted against him, how they might destroy him.

15. But when Iesus knew it, hee departed thence, and great multitudes followed him, and he healed them all.

16. And charged them that they should not make him knowne.

17. That it might bee fulfilled, which was spoken by Esayas the Prophet, saying:

18. Beholde my seruant whom I haue chosen, my beloued in whome my soule delighteth: I will put my spirite on him and hee shall shewe iudgement to the Gentiles.

19. Hee shall not strite nor crie, neyther shall any manne heare his voyce in the streetes.

20. A bruised reede shall hee not breake, and smoking flaxe shall hee not quench, vntill hee bring forth iudgement into victorie.

21. And in his name shall the Gentiles trust.

Marke 3.

6. And the Pharises, departed & straight way gathered a counsel with the Herodians against him, that they might destroy him.

7 But Iesus auoided with his Disciples to the sea: and a great multitude followed him from Galile, and from Iudea,

8. And from Ierusalem, and from Idumea, and beyond Iordan, & they that dwelt about Tyrus & Sidon, whē they had heard what great things hee did, came vnto him in great number

9. And he commanded his disciples, that a shippe should wait for him, because of the multitude, least they should throng him.

10. For he had healed many, insomuch that they preased vpon him, to touch him, as many as had plagues.

11. And when the vnclane spiritēs sawe him, they fell downe before him, and cryed, saying: Thou art the sonne of God

12. And he sharply rebuked them, to the end they should not riter him.

Luke. 6.

11. Then they were filled full of madness and communed one with another what they might doe to Iesus.

14. *Then the Pharises.* See whether obstinate fury carieth the reprobate, in resisting and striving against God: for they being vanquished with his answers, doe yet poure out their poyson more and more. This certainly is a detestable monster, that the cheife doctors of the lawe, which had the gouernement of the Church, should as the eues seeke after murders. But it is necessary it should so come to passe, so oft as they desire to haue ouerthrow whatsoeuer is against their pleasure, though it be from God himselfe. It is not to be imputed to feare, that Christ escapeth away by flight, for he was not any thing more couragious after, then now: but he was led by the strength of the same spirit when he fled, wherewith he was endued after, when hee willingly offered himselfe to death. And this was a portion of his humbling which Paule commendeth, Phil. 2. 7 that when he could by a miracle haue readily defended his life, hee had rather by flying take vpō him our infirmitie. Also he did not defer to die for any other cause, then because that a time conuenient, appointed by the father was not yet come. Yet it is euident that he was preserved rather by a heauenly power then by flight: for it had bene no hard matter for his enemies to haue broken into that place whether he went: for hee drawing such company after him, and making that place famous by his miracles, hid not himselfe in the darke, but only he withdrew himselfe out of their sight, least he should make them more mad. Marke addeth that they tooke counsell with the Herodians, whō they yet hated most deadly. For when they would seeme to be keepers and defenders of the publike libertie, it was necessary that they should professe themselves to haue a deadly hatred against the tyrants officers: yet their mad hatred against Christ so far preuailed, that they not only conspired with strangers, but familiarly they insinuated themselves into their fauour, whose company they otherwise abhorred. For when vngodlines by carying men hether and thether, driueth them into diuers debates and controuersies, yet it knitteth them together with one consent to striue against the Lord. So no hatreds nor enmities doe let, but that the extremest enemies doe ioine hands together to ouerthrow the truth of God.

16. *And hee charged them.* Marke setteth downe an other more speciall matter, that hee put the vncleane spirites to silence, which cryed out that hee was the Sonne of GOD. Wee haue in another place shewed the cause why hee would not admit any such witnesses. Neyther is it to be doubted but that this confession was wrested out of the deuils by the power of God, but after that Christ had shewed that they were subiecte to his power, hee also not without cause refused their testimonie. But that extendeth farther which Matthew sayeth: that is, that Christ commaunded that the same of the miracles which he wrought, shoulde not be spread abroad: not that hee would haue it vnterly suppressed: but that the roare being settled, it might bring forth fruit abundantly in due season. For wee knowe that Christ played not with his miracles, but had propoised this ende, that hee might proue himselfe to be the Son of God, and a Redeemer giuen vnto the world. But he shewed himselfe by a litle and a litle, euen by certaine degrees: neyther was he otherwayes reuealed what he was, then the time or dayned by the father allowed. Yet it is a matter worthy to be noted, while the wicked doe most endeauour to ouerwhelme the glory of God, they are so farre from obtaining that which they hope.

for, that God applyeth all their wicked endeouours rather to the contrary : for though he Christe was gone out of that famous place , yet his glory ceaseth not to shine euen in secret corners, yea, and breaketh out notably into his excellēt brightnesse.

17. *That it might be fulfilled which was spoken.* Mattheu meaneth not that the prophesie was altogether fulfilled in this, that Christ charged that rumors of his power should not be much vttered : but herein is also shewed a token of his humilitie, which Esayas describeth in the person of the Messiah. The miracles which Christ wrought amongst a few, and which he would not should be much boasted of, were able to shake the heauen and the earth. Therefore hee doeth plainly shew how far hee was from the vaine glory and pompe of the worlde. Yet it is conuenient to sift the purpose of Matheuw more narrowly : for he would declare by this circumstance, that the glory of the Godhead of Christ ought not to be the lesse esteemed, because it appeared not in a glorious shew. And certainly the holy Ghost directed the eyes of the Prophet to this purpose. For as flesh doth alwayes desire an outward glorious shew, least the faithfull should seeke for it in the Messiah, the spirit of God doth declare, that he shall be farre vnlike to earthly kinges, which make great stirres and noyses, and fill the cities and townes with tumult, that they may be had in admiration where soeuer they come. Now we see how aptly Matheuw applyeth the saying of the Prophet to the present cause : for because God hath laid so humble and so abiect a person vpon his sonne, least the simple should take offence at his so contemptible & obscure estate, as well the Prophet as Matheuw do meete in one, and they say that it was not done without consideration, but by a celestiall decree, that he should come in that estate. Whereof it followeth that all they doe wickedly which despise Christ, because his outward condition answyareth not their fleshly affections. Neither is it lawfull for vs to deuise a Christ, which shall bee like to our imagination, but it is simply necessary for vs to embrace him as he is offered vnto vs by the father. Therefore he is vnworthy of saluation, in whose eyes the humilitie of Christ seemeth vile, in the which the Lord declareth that hee is delighted. Now I will enter into the wordes of the Prophet Esay 42. 1.

18. *Behold my seruant whom I haue chosen.* That God may tie vs to waite vpon his will, he sheweth as it were with a finger, him whom hee woulde send, and for this cause is this note of demonstration (*Behold*) vsed. There is the like reason also in the Epithites which follow, that he nameth him his seruant, and his chosen wherein his mind delighteth. For how should it come to passe that men should be so bolde as to measure Christ by their owne imagination , except it be because they weigh not that their saluatiō doth depēd vpon the meere fauour of God ? And this is to wicked a libertie, when God offereth vs an incōparable treasure, that men should esteeme of it according to our fleshly desires. And he is called seruant, not as one of the common people, but in respect of dignitie, for that God hath layd vpon him the office of redemption of his Church. And because that no man taketh honour to himselfe, but he which is called , is so worthily to be esteemed : God sayth that he chose in his owne counsell, that hee should come in this order : whereof it followeth, that it is not lawfull for men to refuse him, because that so they should bee contumelious against God. And certainly it is too absurde, that the holy and inuolable calling of God should

shoulde be made of none effecte, through our pleasure or pride. Yet that which God addeth by the Prophet, that his soule delighteth in Christ, hath a further meaning. For though the calling of every one of vs commeth from the free grace of God, as from the onely fountaine: yet this is an especiall delighte in Christe, for that in his person God the father comprehendeth and embraceth the whole Church in his loue. For when we were all by nature the enemies of God, his loue coulde neuer haue come to vs, except hee had first begun at the head, as it is said before, and shall bee seene againe in the 17. chapter.

He shall shew iudgement to the Gentiles. The Prophet doth here describe briefly the office of Christ, when hee foretelleth, that it shall come to passe, that he shal shew iudgement to the Gentiles. The Iewes do comprehend vnder this word iudgement, a state rightly and orderly establisht, wherein equitie and vpright dealing flourisheth. Therefore it is as much as if the Prophet should haue said, that one should come, which shoulde restore righteousness decayed: and that he should be the gouernour not onely of the people, but that hee shoulde bring the Gentiles also vnder the gouernement of God, amongst whom there hadde reigned heretofore nothing but confusion. And this is the signification of this word *shew, or to bring forth*, which the Prophet vseth: for it was the office of Christ to spread the kingdome of God through all the worlde, which was then shut vp in a corner of Iudea, as it is saide in the Psalme, 110. 2. the Lorde shall sende the Scepter of thy power out of Sion. There is also exprest the maner of bringing forth of this iudgement: namely, that God will powre his spirite vpon Christ. It is true that there was neuer any thing done rightly in the worlde, which proceeded not fro the spirit of god, & was set forward by the heauely power of the same: as also there was neuer any of the kings, which coulde erect or defend any lawfull order, but as he was instructed by the same spirit. But Christ in bringing forth iudgement, doth far excell al others, for he receiued the spirit fro the father, which he imparteth to all his disciples: & he doth not only declare by word or by writing what is right but by the power of his spirit he doth inwardly frame the hearts of men to the obseruing of the rules of righteousness.

19. *He shall not striue nor cry.* The summe is, as I said euen now, that the coming of Christ should not be troublefome, because he shal want the kingly furniture & pompe: yet presently it is said, that it is so, for mans saluation, that this humilitie may be brought into fauour, which is euery where despised in the world. And certainly the foolishnes of men is woderful, that they shuld esteeme of christ the worse, because he doth louingly & humbly submit himselfe to their capacity. If christ should appeare in his glory, what thing should come to passe, but that we should be ouerwhelmed with the same? What forward wickednesse then is this, that is vnwilling to receiue him, who for our cause descended from the height of his glory? Therefore, that the gentlenes of Christ might get him reverence amongst the faithfull, the Prophet Isaiah doth admonish vs shewe profitable and necessary it was. Euery one of vs knoweth his owne frailty, and thereby it behooueth vs to consider, how conuenient it is for all men to bee louingly and gently receiued and cherished by Christ?

I speake not of the vnbeleeuers, which are as yet without any sparke of Gods grace: but they which are now called of the Lorde, vntill the light be

more fully kindled in them, & that their strength become more perfect. Are they not all like to a Reede halfe broken, and to a smoking match? Therefore let vs learne to remember this great goodnesse of Christ, who frameth himselfe to our infirmitie. Yet in the meane while let no man flatter himselfe in his sins: but let euery man endeouour to profit better in our selues, least we wander al our life long, or bend & turne at euery blast, like vnto Reedes: but let vs grow on to perfecte menne, that we may stand fast against the sundry assaults of sathan. Let not our faith be like a few small sparkes hidden in a darke smoake: but let it shew forth bright shining beames. Nowe by the example of Christe, all his ministers haue prescribed vnto them, how they ought to behaue themselves. But because that vnder pretence of this place, some do falsly & foolishly pretend, that mildnesse is generally to be vsed towards all men: that difference is to be noted, which the Prophet expressly maketh between the weake and the obstinate. For there are some that are too strong, whose hardnesse it were meete should be broken with the violence of a beetle: which either endeouour to bring darknesse ouer all places, or els are fire-brands to kindle consuming fires euery wher, and it is necessary that their smoke should be scattered, & that their heat should be quenched. Therefore as the faithfull ministers of the word, must diligently apply themselves, that by sparing the weake, they may encrease and nourish the grace of God, which as yet is but small in them: so they must in wise dome take good heed that they nourish not the malicious obstinate, which are nothing like to the smoking flaxe or the brused Reede.

20. *Till he bring forth iudgement into victory.* The words of the Prophet are somewhat otherwise: namely, that hee shall bring forth or lead forth iudgement in truth. yet the speech which Mat. vseth, is full of great importance: that we may knowe that righteousness cannot be placed in the worlde without great strife and labour. For the deuill casteth in what lettes and hindrances hee may, that righteousness should not shew forth but by great wrastring: and that is confirmed by the word victory, which is not obtained but by fighting. For that which presently followeth, the Prophet hath, the Iles shall waite for his lawe. And though matthew hath chaunged the wordes, yet he agreeth in sence, that the grace of Christ shall be common to the Gentiles.

Matth. 21.

22. Then was brought to him one, possessed with a deuill, both blinde and dumme, & hee healed him, so that he which was blinde & dumme, both spake and sawe.
23. And all the people were amazed, and sayd: Is not this the sonne of David?
24. But when the Pharisees heard it, they sayd: this man cannot do demilles no otherwise out, but through Beelzebub the prince of deuils.

Marke. 3.

19. And they came home.
20. And the multitude assembled againe, so that they could not so much as eate bread.
21. And when his kinsfolke heard of it, they went out to lay hold on him, for they thought he had been beside himselfe.
22. And the Scribes which came from Ierusalem, sayde: Hee hath Beelzebub, & through the prince of demilles hee casteth out deuils.

Luke 11.

14. Then he cast out a deuill which was dumme: & when the deuill was gone out, the dumme spake, & the people wondered.
15. But some of them sayd: He casteth out deuils through Beelzebub, the chiefe of the deuils,

It is not to be doubted but that Marke meaneth some certaine space of time long enough, when he descendeth from the miracles to that wicked conspiracie, which Christs kintmen made amongst themselves, that they might bind him as a mad man. In Matheew and Luke there is expresse mention made of one onely myracle, by the which the Pharises tooke occasion of quarrelling. But because they all three agree together in this latter sentence, therefore I thought good heere to set downe that which Mark reporteth. And it is wonder thatther was such forwardnes in Christs kinsmen, which should haue beene the cheife helpers in furthering the kingdome of God. When they see that hee hath gotten him any name, ambition pricketh them so, that they desire to beecome famous at Ierusalem: for they exhorted him that he would goe vp thither, that he might the better aduance himselfe. Now that they see that hee is partly hated of the rulers, partly subiect to many euill speeches, and also despised of the most part: least any danger or enuie, or reproach should come to the whole stock or kindred, they deuise to lay hands vpon him, and to bind him at home, as a man out of his wits: & that they were so perswaded, it appeareth by the words of the Euangelist. Whereby wee doe first learne how blinde mans vnderstanding is, that iudgeth so peruerly of the manifest glory of God. Certainly, the power of the holy Ghost did shine most excellently in all Christs words & deedes, so that if it had bin obscure to others, how could it be hid from his kinsmen, they being so familiarly acquainted? But because the maner of life which Christ led pleased not the world, and so gat him no fauour, but rather procured him many mens hatred, they saine him to bee a mad man. Secondly, let vs learne that the light of faith commeth not of flesh and bloud, but of heavenly grace, least any man should glory in any other birth, but in the new birth of the spirit, as Paul warneth vs, 1. Cor. 5. 17. If any man will be esteemed in Christ, let him bee a new creature.

22. Then was brought to him Luke calleth the deuill, (by whom the man was possessed) dumbe, because of the effect: yet Matheewe sayeth that there was a double plague layd vpon the man. It is certaine that many are blind and dumbe of naturall diseases: but it appeareth that this man was blind in his eyes, and deprived of his speech, though there was no want in those partes pertaining to the sight, or in the proportion of the tongue: Also it is no maruaile that Sathan hath so much libertie as to corrupt the senses of the body, when as by the iust iudgement of God he corrupteth and peruerteth all the powers of the soule.

23. And all the people were amazed. Hereby we gather that the power of God was manifest to bee seene, which caried the common people which was cleare and free from all malicious affection, to haue him in admiration. For how should it come to passe that all the people should be so amazed & wonder, but because the matter so compelled them? And certainly there is none of vs which may not behold in this hystory as in a glasse, the wonderfull power of God. whereby it is to be gathered that the Scribes had their minds infected with deuillish poyson which were not afrayd to cauill at this so excellent a worke of God. But the fruite of the myracle is to be noted: that they which saw it were amased, and enquired amongst themselves, whether Iesus were the Christ. For the power of god being known, they are led as by the had to faith, not that they profit at the first, so much as they should (for they speak doubtfully) but this is no smal fruit,

that they stirre vp themselves more diligently to consider the glory of Christ. Some take it to be a full affirmation: but the wordes sound no such thing, and the matter it selfe sheweth, that they beeing amased at a thing vnlooked for, could not giue a perfect iudgement, but onely that it came into their mindes that it might be that he should be the Christ.

24. But the Pharisees sayd, Because they cannot deny a matter so euident and so plaine, yet they doe maliciously slander that which Christ did by the power of God, neyther do they only obscure the prayse of the miracle, but they endeauour to bring it into slander, as though it had beene wrought by some magicall Exorcisme: & that worke which could not be attributed to man, they attribute to the deuill, as to the authour thereof. Of the word Beelzebub, I haue spoken in the 10. chapter. And we haue spoken in the 9. cha. of the gouernmēt amongst deuils. For it is not an opinion gathered of the error or superstition of the common people, that the Scribes held that there was one that was princely ruler amongst the wicked spirites, but of a receiued opinion amongst the godly, that as Christ is the head of the church, so the reprobate should haue their head.

Mathew. 12.

Marke 3.

Luke. 11.

25. But Iesus knew their thoughts, and said to the: euery kingdome deuided against it selfe, shall be brought to naught: and euery city or house deuided against it selfe, shall not stand.

26. So if sathan cast out sathan he is deuided against himselfe: how shall the his kingdome endure

27. Also if I through Beelzebub cast out deuils, by whom do your children cast them out? Therefore they shall be your iudges.

28. But if I cast out deuils by the spirit of God, then is the kingdome of God come vnto you.

29. Els how can a man enter in to a strong mans house, & spoyle his goods, except hee first binde the strong man, and then spoyle his house. 30. He that is not with mee, is against mee: and he that gathereth not with mee scattereth. 31. Wherefore I say vnto you, euery sinne and blasphemy shall be forgiven vnto men: but blasphemy against the holy ghost shall not be forgiven vnto men.

32. And whosoever shall speake a word against the son of man, he shall be forgiven him: but whoso-

euery

23. But he called them vnto him, & said vnto them in parables: how can sathan drive out sathan

24. For if a kingdome be deuided against it selfe, that kingdome cannot stand. 25. Or if a house be deuided against it selfe that house cannot continue

26. So if sathan make insurrection against himselfe, and be denied, he can not endure, but is at an end. 27. No man can enter into a strong mans

house, and take away his goods, except hee first binde that strong man, and then spoyle his house

28. Perely I say vnto you all sins shall be forgiven vnto the children of men and blasphemies wherewith they blaspheme.

29. But he that blasphemeth against the holy Ghost, shall neuer haue forgiveness, but is culpable of eternal damnation. 30. Because they said he

had an vncleane spirite.

17. But he knew their thoughts and sayde vnto them: euery kingdome deuided against it selfe, shall be desolate, and a house deuided against a house falleth. 18. So if Sathan also be deuided against himselfe, how shall his kingdom stand, because yee say that I cast out deuils through Beelzebub?

19. If I through Beelzebub cast out deuils, by whome do your children cast them out? Therefore shall they be your iudges. 20. But if I by the

finger of God cast out deuils, doubles the kingdome of God is come vnto you. 21. When

a strong man armed, keepeth his house, the thinges that hee possesseth, are in peace. 22. But when a stronger then he, cometh vpon him, and overcometh him, hee taketh from him all his armour wherein he trusted, and deuileth his spoyle.

23. Hee that is not with me, is against me: and he that gathereth not with mee, scattereth.

Luke

ouer shall speake against the ho-
ly Ghost, it shall not be forgiven
him, neither in this worlde, nor
in the world to come.

Lu. 12. 10. And whoſoever ſhall ſpeake
a word againſt the ſon of man, it ſhalbe
forgiue him, but vnto hi that ſhall blaſ-
pheme ꝑ holy ghoſt, it ſhal not be forgiue

25. But Ieſus knew their thoughts. Though Chriſt knew well enough, & had oft
tried that the Scribes uſed of malice to wreſt whatſoever hee did, to the worſt
part: yet it is euident that Math. & Luke do meane that Chriſt knew their hearts.
And it ſeemeth that they ſpake openly to Chriſt, that hee might heare their ca-
uils: but Chriſt by his diuine ſpirit knew of what mind they cauild. For it com-
meth oft to paſſe, that men iudge prepoſterouſly which ſal through ignorance, &
do not impugne the truth of purpoſe, nor nourish any ſecret or hidden poyſon
in them, but are onely caried headlong with raſhneſſe. Therefore the meaning of
this text is, that Chriſt did ſo much the more vehemently inuey againſt them,
becauſe he was witneſ & iudge of the malice which they had conceiued inward-
ly. *Euery kingdom.* He firſt confuteth the cauill objected againſt him by a comon
prouerb. Yet that conſutation ſeemeth not to be ſo full: for we know with what
ſleights ſathan ſometimes deludeth men, making a ſhew of variance, that he may
therby ſnare the minds of men in ſuperſtitious. For the exorcifines in popery,
are nothing elſe but deuſed and ſained conflictes of ſathan againſt himſelfe. But
there can be no ſuch ſuſpition in Chriſt: for he ſo caſteth out deuils, that he ma-
keth them whole & ſound to God. As oft as the deuill hath this conflict with
himſelfe, he ſuffereth himſelfe to be bound in ielt, that hee himſelfe yet hath
the victory & triumpheth. But Chriſt aſſaulteth the deuill with open defiance, ſo
that he caſteth him cleane out, & leaueth him not any place to reſt in. He ouer-
throweth him not on the one ſide, that he may be ſtronger on the other: but he
vterly overthroweth all his deuices. Therefore Chriſt reaſoneth aply, that hee
hath no fellowſhip with him: for this father of deceit hath no other purpoſe but
to vphold & maintaine his kingdom. If any obieſt that the deuils are oft caried
with a wilde giddineſſe and a blind madneſſe, to overthrow themſelues: the an-
ſwere is ready. The meaning of Chriſtes wordes is, that there is nothing more
abſurd, then that the deuill ſhould willingly overthrow that power that he hath
ouer men, who endeuoureth and applyeth all the meanes he can to haue them
in his bondage. Furthermore Chriſt ſo vſeth the comon prouerbs, as probable
conieſtures, and not as ſound and perfect proofes. Laſtly, he ſpeaking of a mat-
ter knowne and wel proued, he vrgeth it the leſſe againſt his enemies conſciences.
No man was ignorant but that Chriſt came to thruſt Sathan out of his poſ-
ſeſſion, and there was nothing more manifeſt then that all his myracles tended
to this end. Whereby it was eaſie to iudge that his power which was ſo con-
trary to Sathan, was of God.

27. By who do your children caſt the out? Hee accuſeth the of wicked & malicious
iudgmeſt, that they iudged not a like of one & the ſame matter, but as they were
affected towards the perſons. But this inequality ſhewed that equity & right pre-
uailed not, but ꝑ they were ouer ruled either with blinde loue or hatred. & this
was a ſigne of wicked ſelfeloue & of enuy, to cōdemne ꝑ in chriſt, which they ac-
couſted praiſe worthy in their own childre. Some take *their childre* for the childre
of al ꝑ natiō. Some think that the apoſtles were ſo called, becauſe they were ac-
couſted as childre, when they accouſted chriſt as a ſtrāger, others refer it to the old
prophets. But I am perſwaded that he meaneth the Exorciftes, of which ſorte
there were many then amongſt the Iewes, as it appeareth in the *Actes*, 19. 17.

for it is likely that they thought no better of the disciples of Christe, then they did of the maister. And it is too much wrested to draw it to the dead prophets, when as the wordes doe plainly set downe a comparison of the same time. The lawes hadde no Exorcistes by the prescript order of the law: but we know that God, that hee might keepe them in fayth and in sincere worshippe of him, testified his presence amongst them by many myracles. And so it might be, that by calling on the name of GOD the deuilles fled. And the people hauing experience of that great power of God, thereof rashly made themselves an ordinary office. The Papiſtes also afterward, least their estate should be any thing inferiour to them, counterfacted them in creating Exorcistes, and so were Apes of Apes. Furthermore, it was not needfull that Christ should in condemning their malice, approoue those Exorcismes which they helde as holy adorned with the name of God, and yet they make Christe a seruant of Beelzebub: for the obiection is directed (according to the common phrase) to the person. That which followeth presently after, that their children should bee their iudges: this is vnproperly spoken, you neede not to seeke farre for your condemnation: the myracles which I worke, you apply to Beelzebub, and you prayse the same in your children. Therefore you haue inough at home to condemne your selues. If that any hadde rather take it otherwise, to wit, that he vpbraideth them of the grace of God, which was sometime shewed amongst them by the Exorcistes, I doe not greatly gainstand it. For though they were degenerate, yet the Lord would not altogether deprive them of his power, but that hee would adorne the priesthoode, and the seruice of the temple, with some generall testimonie. For it was very necessary that they should be distinguished by some euident notes from the superstitions of the Gentiles. But the first interpretation seemeth in my iudgement to bee most naturall.

28. *But if I cast out deuiles by the spirite of God.* Luke Metaphorically calleth it the *Finger*, for the spirite. For because that God worketh & sheweth his power by his spirite, the name of a finger is aptly giuen it. And this speech was common amongst the Iewes, as Moses reporteth, that Pharaohs enchanter sayd, Exod. 8. 19. This is the finger of God. But Christ gathereth of those former wordes, that the Scribes were vnthankfull to God, which would not that he should raigne ouer them. Hetherto hee hath answered their friuolous Obiection: now hee giueth charge as vnto menne conuicte, that they should not oppose themselves wickedly against the kingdom of God. And hee holdeth not himselfe within the copasse of this one myracle: but by occasiō thereof hee speaketh of the cause of his coming, declaring to them that they should not onely consider this one peculiar facte of his, but some thing farre more excellent then this: namely, that God by reulaling the *Messias*, would repayre their decayed estate, and restore his kingdom amongst them. Therefore wee see Christe complayneth of their vnthankfulness: because that they furiously reiect and cast from amongst them the incomparable grace of God. For this worde *Come* is very forcible: to wit, that God appeared willingly to them as a redeemer: but they as much as they coude, driue him from amongst them, and would giue no place to him that was come, ready and prepared for their saluation,

29. *How can a man enter into a strong mans house?* Though the Euangelists doe differ somewhat in wordes, yet they agree notably for the summe of the matter: for Christ profecureth that, which hee touched a litle before of the kingdome of God: and he sayth, that it is necessary that Sathan should be throwne forth by violence, that God may haue his kingdome amongst men: so that this sentence is but a confirmation of that, which went before. But that we may more certainly vnderstand the meaning of Christ, it behooueth vs to remember that Analogy, which Matthew rehearsed before betwene the visible and spirituall graces of Christ. For whatsoeuer he did to our bodies, his will was it should be applyed to the soules, so that when he deliuered the corporal senses of men from the tyranny of the deuill, hee declared that hee was sent from God, a champion that should ouerthrow his spirituall tyranny ouer soules. Now I returne to his wordes: he affirmeth that a strong and mighty tyrant cannot bee driuen out of his kingdome, vntill he be spoyled of his weapons: because that except an other mightier power be set against him, he will neuer willingly giue place. To what purpose is this spoken? First, we know that the deuill is called in diuers places, the prince of the world. And the tyrannous gouernment, which he holdeth is fortified on euery side with strong defences. For there are many snares to entrap men with, and he holdeth them that are now subiect vnto him in such bandes, so that they rather nourish that seruitude, wherein they are bound, rather then by any meanes aspyre to liberty. Also there are innumerable sorts of dangers, by the which he holdeth them miserably ouerwhelmed vnder his feete. To be short, there is nothing to the contrary, but that he may without resistance rule as a tyrant in the worlde, not that he can doe any thing without the will of the maker. but because that Adam by estranging himselfe from the power of God, brought himselfe and his posterity vnder this straunge and miserable seruitude. But though the deuill raigneth against nature, and that by the iust iudgement of GOD, menne are subiecte to his tyranny for their sinne: yet hee holdeth that kingdome in quiet possession: so that hee triumpheth ouer vs without resistance, vntill a stronger then hee shall arise. But there is not a stronger to bee found on earth: for ther is no power in men to helpe themselves: therefore a redeemer was promised from heauen. Now Christ sheweth that this manner of redemption is necessary, that hee should by strong hand wrest from the deuill that, which hee will neuer let goe, except hee bee enforced. By which wordes hee declareth, that menne do hope in vaine for deliuerance, vntill that Sathan bee brought vnder by violent assaults, And though hee purposely reprooueth the ignoraunt folly of the Scribes, because they vnderstood not the beginnings of the kingdom of God: yet this reproofe toucheth almost all menne, sith they are ouerwhelmed almost with the same folly. There is no manne, which will not make a bragge in wordes, that he desires the kingdome of God: yet hee will not, as necessitie requireth, suffer Christ to fight valiantly, that hee may deliuer vs out of the hand of our tyrant: which is, as if a sicke manne shoulde craue the helpe of a Physition, and shoulde abhorre and abstaine from all remedies.

Now wee vnderstand for what purpose Christ brought this parable: namely, that he might shew that the Scribes were enemies to the king-

dome of God, whose beginniges they so maliciously withstoode. Yet because wee are all subiect to the bondage of Sathan, let vs learne, that God doth not begin his kingdome in vs otherwise: but when by the strong and mighty hand of Christ, he setteth vs at liberty from that miserable and hard bondage.

30. *He that is not with me.* This place is expounded two wayes. Some so gather it, as that it should bee an argument of repugnancies: as if Christ shoulde haue sayd, I cannot raigne, except the deuill be ouerthrowne: for all his endeouers are bent vpon this, to scatter whatsoeuer I gather. And certainly we see how the enemy doth too boldly apply himselfe to ouerthrow the kingdome of Christ. Yet I do rather yeeld to their opinion, which interpret the Scribes to be double enemies of the kingdom of God: because that of set purpose they hinder the proceedings of the same. The meaning thereof is this, it were your part to helpe me, and to set your hand to the buylding of the kingdom of God. For, whosoever doeth not helpe, setteth himselfe after a sorte against the same, or at least is worthy to be accounted amongst the enemies. Then what are you, that are carryed by a madde fury, openly to striue against the same? Also it appeareth plainly by their former dealings, how truly Christ now speaketh this, whosoever gather not with him, scatter abroad: when as the readines of our nature to euill is such, so that there is no place for the righteousness of God, but in the which doe earnestly apply them to the same. This doctrine also reacheth further: to wit, that they are vnworthy to be accounted of the flocke of Christ, which apply not their endeouers for the furtherance of the same: and it commeth to passe through their slouth, that the kingdom of God decayeth and falleth to ruine: for the buylding whereof we all are called.

31. *Wherefore I say vnto you* This conclusion may not bee restrayned to the last sentence, but it dependeth of the whole text before. For after Christ hath taught that the Scribes coulde not reprove him for casting out deuilles, but that they sette themselves against the kingdome of God, at length hee concludeth that it was no light saying, nor to be tolerated, but a hainous offence, that wittingly and willingly they blasphemed the spirit of God. For we said before that Christ spake not this of their bare wordes, but of their vngodly & wicked thoughtes.

Every sinne and blasphemie. Because the Lorde pronounceth blasphemy against the spirit to bee the most hainous of all sinnes, it is worth the labour to enquire what he meaneth by this saying. They which interpret it to be vnrepentance may easily be confuted: for vainely and fondly shoulde Christ haue denied, that it could not be forgien in this world. Also the word blasphemie cannot generally be applied to all kindes of sins. But by the comparison, which Christ bringeth, the meaning shall the more easily appeare vnto vs. Why is he sayd to sinne more hainously, which speaketh blasphemy against the spirit, then against Christ? Is it, because the maiesty of the spirit is more excellent, that it should bee more sharply reuenged? Certainly, there is some other cause: for, when as the fulnesse of the God-head was in Christ, whosoever was reproachfull against Christ, ouerthrew and abolished the whole glory of God, as much as in him lay. Now, how shall Christe bee seperated from his spirit, so that they which are contumelious against the spirit, leaue not him vntouched

and vnhurt. Here we begin to gather now the meaning, that blasphemie against the spirit exceedeth not other sinnes, because the spirit is aboue Christ but because that whosoever doe kicke against the power of God reuealed, they are not to be excused vnder the pretence of ignorance.

Further, it is to be noted, that that, which is heere spoken of blasphemy, is not simply referred to the essence of the spirit, but to the grace wherewith we are endued. For they which haue not the light of the spirit, though they speak euill of the glory of the spirit, they are not yet guiltie of this sinne. Now wee perceiue that they blaspheme the spirit of God, which with a determinate malice oppose themselues against his grace and power: and further, that sacriledg is not committed, but that while the spirit dwelling in vs, we doe wittingly endeavour our selues to extinguish the same. And this is the reason why the spirit is sayd to be blasphemed, rather then either the Sonne, or the Father himselfe: because that by blaspheming the grace and power of God, we strike straight at the spirit, from whom proceedeth, and by whom the graces of God appeare in vs. If any that beleue not, blaspheme God, he is as if a blinde man should strike against a wall. But no man blasphemeth the spirit, but he, which being first lightened by the same, doth after against his owne knowledge, wittingly giue himselfe to wicked rebellion. Also that distinction is not in vaine, that all other blasphemies shall be forgien, except that one, which is against the holy Ghost. If any man simply blasphemeth God, there is hope of forgiveness for him: but it is sayd that God will neuer be mercifull to them, that speake blasphemie against the spirit: and why should this be so? But because they, which blaspheme against the spirit, doe against the knowledge of their owne soule, they oppugne and slander the giftes and power of the spirit. That also appertayneth to this purpose, which Marke sayeth: that Christe threatned the Pharisees so hardly, because they sayd, that he had an vnclane spirit: because that in so saying, they purposely, wittingly and maliciously, turned light into darknesse. And this is after the maner of Gyantes (as the prouerbe sayth) to bidde battle against God. Yet heere ariseth a question, whether men will breake out into such madnesse as that they will not doubt, but wittingly and willingly to strike at God: for this seemeth to be a strange monster, not to be beleued. I answer, this boldnesse proceedeth of a frantike blindenesse, wherein malice and poysonfull fury getteth the victory. And it is not without cause, that Paul sayth, 1. Tim. 1. 13. Though he was a blasphemer, yet he receiued mercy, because he did it ignorant ly through vnbeleife. for by these words he distinguisheth his sinne from wilful blasphemie. Also in this place is confuted their error, which imagine that euery wilfull sinne which is committed, the conscience withstanding it, to be vnardonable. But Paule doeth expressly tie that sinne to the first table of the lawe: and the Lorde doeth by the name of blasphemy foynt out one kinde of sinne, and hee also sheweth that it directly fighteth with the glory of God.

But of all these I gather, that they sinne & blaspheme against the holy Ghost, which turne the graces and giftes of God reuealed vnto them by the spirit (by the which they should set forth his glory) to the hinderance and slander of the same.

And

And with Sathan their captaine they are professed enemies to the glory of God Wherefore it is no maruaile if Christ cut away all hope of forgiveness from such knowledge : for they are past hope, which turne the onely medicine of their saving health into deadly poyson. This seemeth to some to be too hard. & therefore they flye to a childish cauill, saying, that it is sayd to be vn pardonable : because the forgiveness of the same is rare and hard to be obtayned. But Christe speaketh more expressely, so that his words cannot so childishly be shifted. They doe also reason too fondly, that God should be cruell, if hee shoulde neuer forgive the sinne : and that his crueltie would make vs all amazed : but they do not consider how haynous the offence is, not onely to prophane the holy name of God of set purpose, but also to spit in his face, while he shineth vpon them with his gracious and favourable countenance. The exception, which other take is as fond : namely, that the meaning should be, that no man should obtayne forgiveness, without repentance. For, it is certaine, that blasphemy against the holy Ghost is a signe of reprobation : whereof it followeth, that all they that fall into the same, are given ouer into a reprobate sense. For, as we hold it to bee vnpossible, that he that is truly regenerate by the spirit, should throw himselfe headlong into so horrible sinne : so againe it is to be holden, that they which fall into the same, can neuer rise againe : And that God in this sorte reuengeth the contempt of his grace, in that he hardeneth the heartes of the reprobate, that they can neuer attaine to repentance.

32. *Neither in this life.* Marke doeth briefly set downe the meaning of these wordes saying, that they which speake against the holy Ghost shall bee subiect to eternall damnation. We aske of God forgiveness of sinnes dayly, and he reconcileth vs vnto himselfe : at length, all sinnes being abolished, in death hee sheweth himselfe mercifull vnto vs, and the fruite of this mercy shall shewe it selfe in the latter day. Therefore the sense is, that there is no hope, that they which blaspheme against the holy Ghost, should obtayne forgiveness in this life or in the latter iudgement. The cauill, which the Papistes gather hereof, that sinnes may be forgiven men after their death, is easily confuted. First, they are foolish in wretting the word, of the world to come to a middle time, when as it is euident to all men that it signifieth the last day : but herein also is their wickednes layd open. because that the cauill, which they pretend, is contrary to their owne doctrine. Their destination is knowne, that the sinnes are freely forgiven in respect of the offence : but they are required in the satisfaction of the punishments. Now they grant that there is no hope of saluation, except the sins be forgiven before the death. Therefore there remaineth to the dead onely forgiveness of the punishment : but they dare not denie, but that this sentence is heere spoken of the sinne. Now, let them goe, and of this colde substance let them kindle their Purgatory fire, if flames can be gotten out of cold ice.

Math. 12.

33. *Eyther make the tree good, and his fruit good, or else make the tree euill, and his fruite euill : for the tree is knowne by his fruit.*

34. *O generation of Vipers, how can yee speake*

Marke.

Luke.

good things, when yee are euill? For of the aboundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.

35. A good man, out of the good treasure of his heart, bringeth forth good things: and an euill man out of an euill treasure, bringeth forth euill things.

36. But I saye vnto you, that of euery idle worde that men shall speake, they shall giue an account thereof at the day of iudgement.

37. For by thy wordes thou shalt be iustified, and by thy words thou shalt be condemned.

33. Either make the tree good. It may seeme to bee absurd, that the choyce is giuen to men to be either good or euil. But if we consider what kinde of menne Christ speaketh to, it shall be easily answered. We know what opinion or estimation there was of the Pharisees: for the mindes of the comon people were so daseled with the faigned shew of their holinesse, that no man durst call their lewd dealings into question. Christe meaning to take away this visard, commandeth them to be either good or euill: as if he should haue saide, there is nothing more contrary to honesty then hypocrisie, and they do challenge to them selues the tytle of righteous in vaine, which are not sincere and vpright. So he putteth nothing in their choise, neither doth he giue them the bridle at libertie: but only admonisheth them that they shall profit nothing by their vaine disguisings, so long as they continue so double, for that it is necessary for men either to bee good or euill. That he sayth, *Make the tree*, some do gather fondly thereof, that it is in euery mans owne hand, to frame his owne life and manners. For it is an vnbrayding kinde of speech, wherewith Christ scattereth the hypocrisie of Scribes as smoake, calling them to a perfect and pure vprightnesse. After hee setteth downe the maner and the way, whereby they may shew themselves to be either good or euill trees: to witte, if they bring forth good or euill fruit. So now there is no ambiguitie in the sence. The life of the Scribes was infamous amongst men, through their grosse sins, & they bewrayed the poyson of pride, ambition, and enuy, thorow their owne ouerthwart cauillings: but because the simple people saw not this, Christe brought this great mischiefe out of the corners into the light. If any obiekt that it cannot bee in this corruption of our nature, that any man should bee found perfecte in euery respect, and pure from all sin: the answer is ready, Christ requireth not an exact perfection, wherein is no want, but only a simple affection without dissimulation, from the which the Pharisees, to whome Christe spake were far wide. For as the scripture calleth them euill and wicked, which are wholly giuen to Satan: so the sincere worshippers of God, though that through the infirmitie of their flesh, they be compassed about with many sinnes: and do grone vnder the burden, are yet called good: and this is the free mercy of God, which vouchsafeth so honourable a title to them, which aspire to goodnesse.

34. *O generation of Vipers.* In this place Christe applyeth the similitude of the tree and the fruite to this present speech, that hee might thereby discouer the inwarde and secrete malice of the Scribes, and this is the cause why he standeth so much in this one kinde of sinne. Therefore Christ in-
ueighed

urged bitterly against them, because they bewrayed by their false flanders, that which was not so euident in the rest of their life. It is sayth he, no merueil, if you vomit out euill words, seeing that your heart is full of malice, let not any thinke the reproofe to be too hard, for truly he could not haue delt more mildly with them. Other sinnes deserue sharp reprehensio, but where vnconstant men do deprauate that, which is right, or seeke to colour those things that are naught, this is a wickednesse, against the which the Lord of right should thunder more vehemently, then against other sinnes. But the purpose of Christe was as occasion serued, to condemne their wicked sophistrie, which turned light into darknesse. This place therefore teacheth how precious truth is to the Lord, whereof he is so sharpe a defender and reuenger. And I would wish that this were more diligently considered of them, which haue a wit too ready and prompt to defend all causes, and set their tongue on sale, to vter all forged subtil shifts. But Christ especially inueigheth against them, whom either ambition or enuy, or other wicked desire enforceth to speake euil, and where there is nothing that their conscience misliketh. Christ also was after this maner sharper against the Pharisees: because they were so bewitched with a false perswasion of righteousness, that a milde admonition should haue profited but little. And certainly, except hypocrites bee sharply pricked, they doe disdainfully despise whatsoeuer is said. *How can ye speake good things.* I haue said before that prouerbiall sentences may not be alwayes drawne to a generall rule, because they only shew what commeth to passe for the most part. And sometimes it commeth to passe, that he which is cruell with sweete alluring words shall deceiue the simple, & that the subtil shall circumuent vnder the cloake of simplicitie, and that he, which imagineth most wickedly, shall in tongue pretend an angellike purity: yet the comon vse proueth that to be true, which Christ here saith, *of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh.* As also in an old prouerbe the tongue is called the Character of the minde. And certainly, though the heart of man hath secreete and hidden corners, and euery man dissembleth his faultes with wonderfull shifts: yet the Lorde wresteth out of all men some confession, so that they bewray with their tongue their desire and inward affections. Also it is to be noted to what ende Christe vseth these parables: for he vpbraideth the Pharisees, for that they vter in wordes the malice, which they had conceiued inwardly. Further, he knowing them to be sworne and obstinate enemies, hee tooke occasion of this one caull to lay open all their life, and to discredit them with the people: for their credit and authoritie was too great, to deceiue and to hurt. Also though good speeches doe not alwayes proceede from the inward affection of the heart, but onely grow (as men say) on the outside of the lips: yet this is alwayes true, euill wordes are witness of an euill heart.

36. *Of euery idle worde they shall giue an account.* The argument is from the lesse to the greater. For euery idle worde is to bee called to an account, howe shall GOD spare their open blasphemies and sacrilegious reproches, which they vter against the glory of God? An idle worde is heere taken for vnprofitable, which bringeth neither edifying nor fruite. This seemeth too harde to many: but if wee consider to what vse our tongues are made, we wil grant that they are worthily to be condemned, which rashly addit
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and apply them to such friuolous trifles. Neyther is it any small offence to abuse the time in wasting it about vaine matters, which Paul commandeth vs, Col 4. 5. carefully to redeem. And sith ther is no mā so spare in speaking, that can so wisely moderate himselfe, but that he shall breake out into some idle speeches, so that if God shoulde deale with vs all according to the extremitie of the lawe, there remayned nothing for vs but despaire. But because the hope of our saluation is grounded vpon this, that God will not enter into iudgement with vs, & that of his free mercie hee will forget our sinnes, which deserue innumerable deaths: we doubt not but that he blotting out the guiltines of all our life, will also pardon the offence of vaine speech. For the scripture speaking of the iudgement of God, doth not ouerthrow the forgiuenes of sins: yet let no man flatter himselfe heereby: but let euery man diligently endeouour to bridle his tongue. First, that wee may speake of the holy misteries of God ieuently and soberly: then, that wee may abstaine from scurrilitie and vaine iestings, and especially from enuious euill speaking: & lastly we must giue our diligence that our speech may be seasoned with salt, Col. 4. 6.

37. *By thy wordes thou shalt be iustified.* He applyeth the common prouerbe to this present cause. For, I doubt not but that this saying was common in the mouthes of the people, that euery man should either be condemned or absolved by his owne confession. And Christ applyeth it to a sense somewhat differing: namely, that the wicked speech, as it is a shew of hidden mallice, so it sufficeth to condemne a man. And the obiection, which the Papistes gather, by wresting this to ouerthrow the righteousness of faith, is a childish fancy. Man is iustified by his owne words, not that the speech is the cause of righteousness: for by faith we obtaine the fauour of God, that hee should account vs for righteous: but the pure speech purgeth vs, from being found wicked in our tongue. Is it not foolishly inferred of this, that men should deserue a part of righteousness before God? But this place rather strengtheneth our doctrine. For though Christ entreateth not of the cause of our righteousness, yet the contrarietie betwene the two words declareth what this word, *to iustifie* signifieth. It seemeth absurd to the Papists, that we say that man is iustified by faith: for they expound it to be made and to be righteous in deede: and we vnderstand it to be accounted righteous, and to be cleared before the iudgement of God, as it plainly appeareth by many testimonies of the scripture. And doeth not Christ confirme the same, when he opposeth to iustifie and to condemne one against an other?

Math. 12.

Mark

Luke 11.

43. Nowe when the vncleane spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through out dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none.
44. Then he saith, I will returne into mine house, from whence I came, and when hee is come, hee findeth it empty, swept and garnished.
45. Then hee goeth, and taketh vnto him seauen other spirits worse then himselfe, and they enter in and dwell ther and the end of that man is worse then the beginning. Euen so shal it be with this wicked generation.

24. When the vncleane spirit is gone out of a man, hee walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and when hee findeth none, he saith, I will returne vnto mine house, whence I came out.
25. And when he commeth, hee findeth it swept and garnished.
26. Then goeth hee, and taketh to him seuen other spirits worse then himselfe: and they enter in and dwell there, so the last state of that man is worse then the first.

43. W. en

43. *When the vncleane spirit.* Hee pronounceth against the Scribes and such hypocrites, which despise the grace of God, and conspire with the deuill, such a iudgement as their vnthankfulnes deserueth. Yet that the fruit of doctrine may more largely appeare, hee generally declareth what iudgement they procure to themselves, which by despising grace offered, doe againe open a dore to the deuill. But, because there is great waight almost in euery seuerall clause, some things must bee noted in order, before wee handle the summe of the parable. When Christ speaketh of the going out of the deuill, he commiendeth vnto vs: the force and effect of the grace of God, so oft as it commeth vnto vs: but especially when God draweth neere vnto vs in the person of his sonne: the ende is, that wee being deliuered from the tyranny of the deuill, hee might take vs to himselfe, and that did Christ plainly declare in the former miracle. Therefore, sith it is his peculiar office to driue away euill spirites, that they should not reigne any more in men, it is well sayd, that the deuill goeth out of those men, to whom Christ offereth himselfe a redeemer. And though the presence of Christ is not effectually to all, because the vnbeleeuers make it to be of none effect to them: yet he woulde haue vs to note to what ende hee visiteth vs, what his coming auayleth of it selfe, and lastly what the euill spirites doe feelee. For, hee neuer worketh in men, but that the deuils beeing brought into the conflict, doe giue place vnto his power. Therefore it is to bee noted, that the deuill is cast out of vs so ofte as Christ shineth vpon vs, and sheweth by some testimony his sauour towards vs. Also, the miserable condition of all mankind is heere described vnto vs: for it followeth that the deuill hath a dwelling place in men: because hee is driuen out from thence by the sonne of GOD. And hee speaketh not of one or other particular man, but of all the offspring of Adam. This therefore is the glory of our nature, that the deuill hath his seate in vs: so that hee dwelleth as well in our body, as in our soule. Whereby wee also see a spectacle of the most excellent mercie of God, in that of filthy stables of the deuill, hee maketh vs temples for himselfe, and consecrateth vs for a dwelling place for his spirit. Thirdly, he painteth out vnto vs the practise of Sathan: to wit, that hee neuer ceaseth from endangering vs, but applyeth it dayly, and turneth himselfe euery way: and to bee short, hee bendeth all his endeouours to worke our destruction: but especially where he is vanquished, and put to flight by Christe, hee enrageth and desireth to hurt the more. For, before that Christ maketh vs partakers of his power, the enimie reigneth in vs, as it were in play and sport. But being driuen out, hee sorroweth the losse of his pray, he gathereth new forces, and stirreth all the powers hee hath, that hee may ouerthrow vs againe. Therefore it is sayd metaphorically, that hee walketh through drie places: for his banishment is greiuous to him, and his dwelling out of men is like to a filthy desert. In the same sense also hee sayeth, that hee seeketh rest so long as hee is out of men: because that then hee fretteth and tormenteth himselfe, and hee craseth not to try euery way, vntill hee recouer that he hath lost. Wherefore let vs learne, as soone as Christe calleth vs, there is a hot and a sharpe combat prepared for vs. For though he attempteth to destroy all men, and that saying of Peter appertayneth to all, without exception, that he goeth about like a roaring Lyon, seeking whom hee may deuoure, 1 Pet. 5. 18. Yet we are plainly taught by these words of Christ, that he burneth with grea-

ter hatred, and is caried with more enuious force, against them which are taken out of his snares. But this admonition ought not to make vs afrajd, but to stirre vs vp, to make vs diligent in keeping our waches, that being armed with spirituall armors, we may be strong to resist him.

44. *Hee findeth it emptye.* Christ without doubt meaneth them, which being voyd of the spirit of God, are readie to receiue the deuill. For, the faithfull in whom the spirit of God doth dwell perfectly, are sofenced on euery side, that there is no hole or ginne left open for Sathan. That he calleth it a house swept and garnished, is a similitude borrowed of the vse of men, which are delighted with cleanes and neatnesse in their lodgings, For deformitie is onely beautifull to Sathan, and nothing sauoureth well to him, but stinch and filthinesse. But the meaning is, that Sathan can neuer haue a more conuenient place in vs, then when we bid Christ farewell, & admit him in for a guest. Therefore his greatest delights are in that emptinesse, which followeth after the neglect of the grace of God.

45. *Hee taketh to him seuen other.* The number of seuen is taken heere indefinitely, as it is oft in other places. Also Christ teacheth in these words, that if wee fall from his grace, we are double endangered to Sathan, so that he vseth a greater libertie ouer vs then before, and this is a iust punishment of our slouthfulness. Wherefore let vs not thinke that the deuill is ouercome in one battell, when he is once throwne out of vs: let vs rather remember, sith he hath dwelt in vs of old, euer since we were borne, he hath found and by experience known all those wayes, by which he may enter into vs: if the common passage bee not open to him, he wanteth no subtiltie to creepe in secretly by priuy mines & secret ginnes. Therefore we must labour diligently, that Christ ruling and reigning in vs, may shut vp all passages against his enemy. For although the assaults of Sathan are sharpe and dangerous, there is no cause why they should weaken the children of God: for the invincible power of the holy Ghost keepeth them in safetie. And wee know that this plague is onely pronounced against the despisers of the grace of God, which menne become profane by choaking vp the light of faith, and by suppressing the study of godlinesse.

Matth. 12.

Marke 3.

Luke 11.

46. While he yet spake to the multitude, beholde his mother and his brethren stood without, desiring to speake with him.

47. Then one sayd vnto him, behold thy mother and thy brethren stande without desiring to speake with thee.

48. But he answered and sayd to him that told him, who is my mother? and who are my brethren?

49. And

31. Then came his brethren and mother, and stood without, and sent vnto him, & called him.

32. And the people sate about him, and they said vnto him, behold, thy mother & thy brethren seek thee without.

33. But he answered them, saying, who is my mother and my brethren?

34. And he looked round aboute on them, which sate

27. And it came to passe, as hee sayd these things, a certaine woman of the companie lifted vp her voyce, and sayd vnto him, blessed is the wombe, that bare thee, and the pappes, which thou hast sucked.

28. But he sayd, yea rather blessed are they, which heare the word of God, and keepe it.

Luke 8.

19. Then came to him his mother, and his brethren, and coude

Y

not

49. And hee stretched forth his hand towards his disciples, and sayd, behold my mother and my brethren.

50. For, whosoener shal do my fathers wil which is in heauen, the same is my brother, sister and mother.

saie in compasse about him, and sayd, behold my mother and my brethren.

35. For whosoener doth the will of God, hee is my brother, and my sister and my mother

not come neere to him for the praise
20. And it was tolde him by certaine, which sayd, thy mother and thy brethren stande without, and would see thee.

21. But hee answered and sayd vnto them, my mother and my brethren are these, which heare the word of God and doe it.

L V. 27. Blessed is the wombe. The meaning of the woman was in this order to set forth the excellencie of Christ: for she had no respect to Mary, whom peradventure she neuer saw: but this doth not a litle set forth the glory of Christ for that he ennobled and made blessed the wombe wherein he was borne. And this blessing of God is no absurd nor strang matter, but is spoken after the manner of the scripture, for we know that the child, which is especially adorned with notable grace, is preferred aboue al other as a singular gift of God. And it cannot be denied, but that God chusing and appointing Mary to be the mother of his sonne, gaue her great honour thereby. Yet Christes answer yeldeth not so to the womans words, but is rather a sharp reproofe. Nay, saith he, blessed are they which heare the word of God. We see that Christ made almost no account of that, which the woman only extold. And certainly that which she thought had bene Marys greatest glory, was far inferiour to her gifts of grace: for it was much more dignitie to be regenerate by the spirit of Christ, then to conceiue the flesh of his Christ in her wombe: to haue Christ spiritually liuing in her then to giue him suck with her breasts. To be short, the holy virgins greatest felicitie & glory was in this, to be a member of her sonne, & that he accounted her amongst the new creatures of the heauenly father. Yet I think that the womans speech was reproofed for an other cause, and to an other end: namely, because me comonly neglect the gifts of God, which in a mase they wonder at, and sound with full mouthes. For this womā in praysing Christ, omitted that, which was the chief, that in him there was saluation offered to all men. That therefore was but a cold comédation, wherein there was no mentiō of his grace & power, which extendeth vnto al men, Wherefore Christ doth rightly challenge vnto himself an other kind of praise, that his mother only shuld not be accounted blessed, & that in respect of the flesh: but because he bestoweth vpon vs al perfect & eternall blessednes. Therefore the dignitie of Christ is then esteemed of as it ought to be, when we consider to what end Christ was giuen vs of the father, & that we feele what benefits he hath brought vnto vs that we in him may be made blessed, which are in our selues miserable. But why speaketh he nothing of himselfe, and maketh mention only of the word of God? because that by this meanes he openeth vnto vs al his treasures, & he doth not any thing with vs, nor we againe with him without his worde. Sith therefore he communicateth himselfe vnto vs by the word, rightly & properly he calleth vs to heare & keep the same, that he by faith may become ours. Now, we se what

Christes

Christes answer differeth from the commendation of the woman: for hee offereth that blessednes liberally to all, which shee had after a sorte tyed to one house, also he teacheth that he must not be accounted of in a cōmon sort or order, because that he hath all the treasures of heauenly life, blessednes and glory hidden in him, which he dispenseth by his worde, that they which embrace the worde, may by sayth be made partakers of the same. For the free adoption of God, which we learne out of his word is the key of the kingdō of heauen. And this ioyning them together is to be noted, that first we must heare, & then obserue & keepe: for faith cometh by hearing, Ro. 10 17. & here ariseth the foundation and beginning of the spirituall life. But because that simple hearing is as a vaine looking into a glasse, as Iames declareth, 1. 23. The keeping of the word is also added, which is as much as an effectually receiuing, where it taketh liuely rootes in the hearts, that it may bring forth the fruit. So the vaine hearer, who hath onely his eares beaten with the outward doctrine getteth nothing. And whosoever boast that they are satisfied with a secrete inspiration, and vnder this pretence neglect the outward preaching, are excluded out of the heauenly life. Therefore those things, which the sonne of God hath ioyned, let no men of a sacrilegious rashnes put a sunder. The blockish folly of the papists is to be wondered at, that they would sing these wordes in the honour of Mary, which doe so plainly confute their superstition: but in their thankgiuing, they cul out the womans words, omitting the woordes of Christe which reproveth. But so it was meete that they should be by all meanes bewitched, which inducours themselves to prophane the holy word of God after their owne pleasure.

L V. 19. Then came to him, There seemeth to be some difference betweene Luke & the other two Euangelists: for they in setting downe their history say, that the mother and kinsfolkes of Christ came, when hee had spoken of the vn-cleane spirit: and Luke referreth it to an other time, and onely setteth downe the exclamation of the woman, which wee expounded euen now. But because it is well knowne that the Euangelistes were not very curious in obseruing the course of times, nor in prosecuting all perticular deeds & sayings, the answer is not so hard. For Luke setteth not downe what time Christes mother came: but that which the other two set before the parable of the sowing, hee setteth after. And that he saith, a certaine woman of the cōpany cryed, is somewhat like to this history: for it may be that of an vnaduised zeale she extolled that to the highest degree, which she thought Christ made too small account of: they do all agree in this, that christis brethré & mother came while he was speaking in the midst of the cōpany: & without doubt it was either because they were carefull of him, or because they desired to learne: for they laboured not to come to him in vaine: neither is it likely ꝑ they were vnbeleeuers, which accompanied the holy mother. There is no colour that Ambrose & Chrysostō do imagine ꝑ Mary did it of ambition. For what need this imagination, whē as the spirit doth euery where testify to her cōmendation of her great goodnes and modestie? It may bee that the crannies of their carnal affectiō made the more busie then needed: I deny not this: but I iudge that they came of a godly desire to ioyne themselves to his cōpany. That Mat. reporteth that the message of their cōming was brought to him by one certaine man, and that Mar. and Lu. do attribute it to mo, hath no absurditie in it. But (as it commonly cometh to passe) the commandement, which the

mother gaue of calling him soorth, was receiued, and so passed amongst many, vntill at length it was brought vnto himselfe.

M A T. 48. *Who is my mother?* It is not to be doubted, but that Maries importunitie is reprov'd in these words, and certainly she delt very preposterously to attempt to hinder the course of his doctrine. But yet this setting light by the kindred of flesh and blood, doth deliuer a very profitable doctrine, while he receiueh all his disciples and faithfull ones into the same degree of honour, as if they had beene chiefe a nonge his kinsfolkes. But this sentence dependeth of the office of Christ, for he declareth hereby that hee is not giuen to a certaine small number, but to all the godly, which by faith shoulde grow into one body with him. Then, that there is not a more excellent bond of kindred, then the spirituall: because he ought not to be accounted after the flesh, but of the power of his spirit, wherewith he was enriched by the father to renew men, that they which by nature were a filthy and cursed seede of Adam, should by grace begin to be holy and heauenly children of God. Therefore Paule, 2. Cor. 5. 16. saith, that Christ cannot be knowne truly after the flesh: because the new repaying of the world is rather to be considered, which exceedeth farre aboue mans power, while he reformeth vs by his spirit to the image of God. wherefore this is in summe the purpose, that we should learne to looke vpon Christe with the eyes of fayth: also wee must knowe, that euery one that is regenerated by the spirit, giueh himselfe wholly to God in true righteousness to be thoroughly ioy-ned to Christ, and so to be made one with him. Further, hee meaneth that they doe the will of the father, not which exactly fulfill all the righteousness of the law (for so this name of brother, which Christ giueh to his disciples shoulde agree to no man) but he especially commendeth faith, which is the fountaine & beginning of holy obedience: it also couereth the wantes and offences of the flesh, that they bee not imputed. For the saying of Christ is well knowne, this is the will of my father, that euery man, which seeth the sonne, and beleueh in him, should not perish, but haue euerlasting life, Ioh. 6. 40. And though christ seemeth here to haue no respect of blood, yet we know that hee did indeed sanctifie mankind with worshipping, and performed the lawfull duties towards parents: but he teacheth vs that in respecte of the spirituall kindred, the kindred of the flesh is of none or of small estimation. Let therefore this comparison so far preuaile with vs, that we may pay that which is due to nature, but let vs not bee too much tyed to flesh and blood. But sith Christe vouchsafeth that incomparable honour to the disciples of the Gospell, that he accounteth them for brethren: our vnthankfulnesse is to be deteeted, if we reiect not all the desires of the flesh, and bend all our endeouours hether.

Matth. 12.

Marke.

Luke 11.

38. Then answered certaine of the Scribes & of the pharises, saying, master, we would see a signe of thee. 39. But he answered & said vnto them, an euil & adulterous generatiō seek a signe, but no signe shalbe giue vnto it, saue the signe of the prophet Ionas. 40. For as Ionas was three dayes and

16. And others tempted him, seeking of him a signe from heauen.

A little after.

29. And when the people were gathered thicke together, hee began to say, this is a wicked generation: they seek a signe, & there shal no signe be giuen the, but the sign of Ionas the prophet

30. For

and three nightes in the whales belly: so shall the sonne of man be three daies and three nightes in the heart of the earth.

41. The men of Nininie shall rise in iudgement with this generation, & condemne it: for they repented at the preaching of Ionas: & behold a greater then Ionas is here.

42. The Queene of the south shall rise in iudgement with this generation, and shall condemne it: for shee came from the utmost partes of the earth, to heare the wisdom of Salomon: and behold, a greater then Salomon is here.

30. For as Ionas was a signe to the Ninuities, so shall the Sonne of man be to this generation.

31. The Queene of the south shall rise in iudgement with the men of this generation, and shall condemne them: for shee came from the utmost partes of the earth, to heare the wisdom of Salomon, and behold, a greater then Salomon is here.

32. The men of Nininie shall rise in iudgement with this generation, and shall condemne it: for they repented at the preaching of Ionas, and beholde a greater then Ionas is here.

38. Certaine of the Scribes. Matthew reporteth somewhat the like againe in the fixteene chapter, and Marke in the eight chapter. Whereby it appeareth that Christ was often questioned with of this matter: so that their wickednes hadde no end, which once were determined to resist the truth. It is euident that they demaunde a signe, that their vnbeliefe might haue some faire show: namely, that the calling of Christ was not lawfully confirmed. Neither were they so easie & apt to be taught, as that they would giue place to three or foure miracles, much lesse would one suffice them. But as I touched it euen now, they excused themselves by this colour that they beleued not the Gospell, because Christ shewed no scale of the same from heauen. Hee had now wrought miracles enough in number, and euident before their eyes: but as if they were of no force for the confirmation of the doctrine, they would haue some signe from heauen, wherein God after a sort should visibly appeare. They for manner sake doe salute him by the name of maister: because that then they so called all the Scribes and Interpreters of the law: but they do not acknowledg him to be a Prophet of God, vntill he doe bring some testimonie from heauen. The meaning therefore is, sith thou professest thy selfe to be a teacher and a maister, if thou wilt haue vs to be thy disciples, bring it to passe, that God from heauen may testifie, that he is the authour of thy maistership, and confirme thy calling by a miracle.

39. Euill generation. He doth not onely accuse the malice of that age, but hee accuseth the Iewes for a wicked nation. or the Scribes and such like: signifying that this disease of obstinate stubbornes came vnto them as it were by inheritance. For the word here vsed is sometime taken for one age, sometime for a country or nation. And he calleth them adulterous, for corrupt people, begotten in adultery, or bastards, because they were degenerate from their holy fathers: as the Prophets doe also reprove the vnbeleeuers of their age, not to be the offspring of Abraham, but a prophane seed of Chanaan.

Now it is demaunded whether Christ did so sharply reprove them, because they desired to haue a signe giuen them. For in the booke of Iudg. 6. 17. God sheweth that hee was not so much displeased with these thinges, Gedeon demaundeth a signe: GOD is not angry, but granteth his request,

and though hee proceedeth importunately, yet God yeeldeth to his infirmitie, God offereth willingly a signe to Ezechiah, who demanded it not, Esay. 38. 12. And Achis was sharply reprobued, because he refused to demaund a signe, as he was commaunded by the Prophet, Esay. 7. 11. Therefore Christ doth not simply reprove the Scribes, because they demand a signe: but for that they being vnthankfull to God, hauing maliciously refused so many of his graces and powers, take this as a shift, least they should obey his word. For I doe not onely say that it was their slouth, but their malice, which kept their eyes shut at so many miracles. Therefore they were troubled in vaine: for their deuse was to no other purpose, but that they might freely reiect Christ. Paule condemneth the same fault in their posteritie, 1. Cor. 1. 22. When he sayth, that the Iewes seeke for signes.

No signes shall be giuen vnto it. They were after conuict by sundry myracles: and Christ ceased not to shewe his power amongst them, that he might thereby take all excuse from them. But he ouely meaneth that one signe, which should bee vnto them in steade of all: because they were vnworthy to haue their wicked desire satisfied. Let them be content, sayth he, with this signe, that as Ionas brought out of the bottome of the sea preached to the Ninuities, so they should heare the voyce of a Prophet raysed to life againe. I know that many haue interpreted this place more subtilly: but sith the similitude between Christ and Ionas hold not in all the particular pointes of the same, it is to bee teen how farre Christ compareth himselfe to Ionah. But I omitting the speculations of other men, doe thinke this one thing meete to be noted, which I touched euen now, that he should become a prophet vnto them after his resurrection: as if he should haue sayd, you contemne the sonne of G O D, which descended to you from heauen: Therefore it remaineth that I being dead shoulde rise from the graue, and being restored to life againe, I will speake vnto you, as Ionas came out of the bottome of the sea. Therefore the Lorde so cut away all occasions from their wicked desires, that he sayth, that after his resurrection hee woulde become a Prophet to them, seing they would not receiue him cloathed in mortall flesh. In Luke he saith, that he would be a signe vnto thes, as Ionas was vnto the Ninuities. The word *signe* is vnproperly vsed, not that it should foreshewe any thing, but that it is removed farre from the common order of nature: as the sending of Ionah was wonderfull, when he was brought out of the belly of the fish, as out of a graue, that he might call the Ninuities to repentance. In this phrase of *three nights* is a figuratiue speech, as it is well knowne. For because the night is adioyned to the day, or because the day consisteth of two parts: light, and darkenes: of which two Christ noteth one day, & putteth one whole day for a halfe.

41. *The men of Nininie shall rise in iudgment.* Because he had spoken of the Ninuities, christ tooke hereof occasiō to shew that the scribes & others, which refuse his doctrine to bee much worse then they were. The prophane men, sayth he, which neuer heard word of the true God, repeted at the voice of this new and strang guest this kingdom, which is the library of the heauely doctrine, will not heare the son of God and the promised redeemer. For in this similitude there is this Attache is. It is known what the Ninuities were: namely, that they were not accustomed to haue Prophets, but were without true doctrine, Ionas came not amongst them.

thē with any glorious title, but a stranger might easily haue bene reiected. The Iewes boasted that the word of God had a seate & dwelling place amongst thē, if they had looked vpon Christ with cleare eies, they shuld not onely haue known that he was a teacher sent fro heauen, but also the Mēssias & authour of saluatiō promised them. But if the miserable wickednes of the people was therefore condemned, because they despised Christ speaking vpon earth: we excel the vnbelieuers of all times, if we obey not the holy and heauenly voyce of the sonne of God, now sitting in heauē. Furthermore, I wil not now entreat whether the Ninuits were truly & perfectly cōuerted to god: because it sufficeth that they were so moued at the doctrine of Ionah: that they gaue their mind to repentance.

42. *The Queene of the south.* Because that Aethiopia lieth fourthward in respect of Iudea, I do easily assēt to Iosephus & others, which say that this was the queene of Aethiopia: & that she is called in the scriptures the queene of Saba, it may not be vnderstood of the country of Sabea, which lieth more eastward, but of a citie in the Ile of Meroes situated vpon Nilus, which was the chiefe citie of the kingdom. Here also is it good to weigh the comparisōns: a woman, which was neuer brought vp in Gods schoole, for a desire she had to learne, came out of a far country, to Salomon an earthly king. The Iewes students of the law of God, do refuse their chiefe and onely teacher, & prince of the prophets. Also the phrase of iudging is not here so much referred to the persons, as to the example of the thing it selfe.

Matth. 13.

1. *The same day went Iesus out of the house, and sate by the sea side.*
 2. *And great multitudes resorted vnto him, so that hee went into a ship, & sat down: & the whole multitude stood on the shore.*
 3. *Then he spak many things vnto thē in parables, saying, Behold, a sower went forth to sowe.*
 4. *And as he sowed, some fell by the way side, & the fowles came & deuoured them vp.*
 5. *And some fell vpon stony ground, where they had not much earth, and anone they sprong vp, because they had no depth of earth.*
 6. *And when the sunne rose vp, they were parched, & for lacke of rooting, withered away.*
 7. *And some fell amonge thornes, and the thorns sprong*

Marke. 4.

1. *And he began againe to teach by the sea side, & ther gathered vnto him a greate multitude. so that he entred into a ship, & sate in the sea: & all the people was by the sea side on the land.*
 2. *And he taught thē many things in parables, & sayde vnto them in his doctrine.*
 3. *Hearken behold, there went out a sower to sowe.*
 4. *And it came to passe as hee sowed that some fell by the way side, and the fowles of the heauen came, and deuoured it.*
 5. *And some fell on stony grounde, where it had not much earth, and by and by sprang vp, because it hadde not depth of earth.*
 6. *But as soone as the sun was vp, it caught heat, and because it had not root,*

Luke. 8.

1. *And it came to passe afterward, that hee himselfe went through euery citie & towne, preaching and publishing the kingdōe of God, & the twelue were with hī.*
 2. *And certaine women, which were healed of euill spirits, & infirmities, as Mary which was called Magdalc, out of whō went 7. deuils*
 3. *And Iohaunna, the wife of Chusa, Herodes stewardes, and Susanna, and many other which ministred vnto him of their substance.*
 4. *Now when much people were gathered to gether, and were come to him, out of all citties, hee spake by a parable.*
 5. *A sower went out to sow his seed: and as he sowed, some fell by the way side, & it was troden vnder feete, and the fowles of the heauen deuoured it vp.*

vp, and choaked them.

8. Some againe fell in good ground, and brought forth fruit, one corne an hundred fold, some sixty fold, & another thirty fold.

9. Hee that hath eares to heare, let him heare.

10. Then the Disciples came & sayde vnto him: why speakest thou to them in parables?

11. And he answered, & saide vnto them, because it is giuen vnto you to know the secrets of the kingdome of heauen, but to them it is not giuen.

12. For whosoever hath, to him shall be giuen, and he shall haue abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away, euen that he hath.

13. Therefore spake I to them in parables, because they seeing doe not see: and hearing, they heare not, neither vnderstand.

14. So in them is fulfilled the prophesie of Iſaías, which prophesie sayth, by hearing, yee shall heare, and shall not vnderstand, and seeing, yee shall see, and not perceiue.

15. For this peoples heart is waxed fat, and their eares are dull of hearing, and with their eyes they haue winked, leaſte they shoulde see with their eyes, and heare with their eares, and shoulde vnderstand with their heartes, and shoulde re turne, that I might heale them.

16. But blessed are your eies, for they see: and your eares, for they heare.

17. For verily I say vnto you, that many prophets and righteous men haue desired to see those thinges, which yee see, and haue not seene shē, & to heare those thinges, which ye heare, & haue not heard them.

it withered away.

7. And some fell among the thornes, & the thornes grew vp, and choaked it: so that it gaue no fruit.

8. Some againe fel in good ground, & did yeeld fruit, that sprang vp, and grew, & it brought forth, some thirty fold, some sixty fold, & some an hundred fold.

9. Then he said vnto thē, he that hath eares to heare let him heare.

10. And when hee was alone, they that were about him with the twelue, asked him of the parable.

11. And he said vnto thē, to you it is giuen to know the mystery of the kingdome of God: but vnto them that are without, all thinges be done in parables.

12. That they seeing, may see, & not discerne, and they hearing, may heare, and not vnderstand, leaſt at any time they shoulde turne, & their sins shoulde be forgiven them.

Somewhat after.

24. And he sayde vnto them, take heede what ye heare. With what measure ye meate, it shall be measured vnto you: and vnto you that heare shall more be giuen.

25. For vnto him that hath, shall it be giuen, & from him that hath not, shall be taken away, euen that he hath.

6. And some fell on the stones, and when it was sprung vp, it withered away, because it lacked moisture. 7. And some fel among thornes, and the thornes sprang vp with it, & choked it. 8. And some fel on good ground, and sprang vp, & bare fruites, an hundred fold. And as he said these thinges, he cried, he that hath eares to heare let hē hear. 9. Then his disciples asked him, demanding what parable it was.

10. And he said, vnto you it is giuen to knowe the secrets of the kingdome of God, but to other in Parables, that when they see, they should not see, and when they heare, they should not vnderstand.

Somewhat after.

18. Take heed therefore how ye heare: for whosoever hath, to him shall be giuen, & whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken euen that, which it seemeth that he hath.

Luke. 10.

23. And hee returned to his disciples, and saide secretly, blessed are the eyes, which see that yee see.

24. For I tel you that many prophets & kings haue desired to see those thinges which yee see: & haue not seene them: & to heare those thinges which yee heare, and haue not heard them.

These

These things which I haue here written downe out of Luke, doe peraduenture belong to some other time; but no reason seemeth to compell mee to separate those things which he hath ioyned together in one text. First he sayth that the 12. Apostles preached the kingdome of God with Christ. Whereof we gather, that though the ordinarie office of teaching was not as yet laid vpon them, yet they were continuall helpers to make the people attentive hearers of their master. So though their estate was farre inferiour, yet they are accounted as helpers of Christ. Also he addeth that Christ had certaine women in his company, which were healed and deliuered from euill spirites and other infirmities, as Marie Magdalene was, who had bene tormented of seuen deuills. The hauing of this company might seeme to be smal for his honour: for what was more vndecent for the Sonne of God, then to leade women about with him, noted with infamie? But by this we do the better perceiue that the sinnes wherewith we were loden before we beleued, are so farre from hindering the glory of Christ, that they doe rather amplifie & set forth the same. And it is not sayd that he found the Church which he chose, without spotte or wrinkle, but that he washed & clesned it with his blood, that he might make it pure and beautifull. Wherefore the miserable and shamefull estate of these women, after they were deliuered from the same, made greatly for the glory of Christe, for they were ensignes and tokens of his power and of his grace. Luke also commendeth their thankfulness, in that they despising the shame of the world, followed their deliuerer. It is not to bee doubted but that they were poynted at with the finger euery where, and the company and presence of Christ was vnto them as a Theatre to set them forth to the shew: but they refuse not to set their shamefastnesse openly a broach, rather then that the grace of Christ being suppressed, should be hid: but that the beholding of Christ might bee the more notable, they do willingly suffer themselves thus to be humbled. Also, singular and wonderfull was the shew of the great goodnesse of Christ towards Mary, in that the being a woman possessed by seuen deuils, and as a most vile bondslawe of Sathan, he did not only vouchsafe her the honour of a disciple, but tooke her also to his company. Luke addeth the surname of Magdalene, that he may make a difference betweene her and Marthas sister & other Maries, of whom there is mention in other places.

LUKE. 3. *Ioanna the wife of Chusa*. It is not knowne whether Luke would that that which he spake of Mary, should be vnderstood of these women also. In my opinion it seemeth probable, that she was first placed in order, in whom Christ had shewed his great power. And that Chusas wife & Susanna, honest matrons and of good name & fame, were added after, only because they were healed of some common diseases. And their godly endeavour deserueth so much the more praise, because that they being rich & noble matrons, ministred vnto Christ of their owne substance. And not content with this labour, they leauing all the affaires of their owne houses, had rather follow him with enuy and many discommodities, through strange and vncertaine lodging places, then to enioy delicate quietnesse in their owne houses. And it may be that Chusa, Herodes stewarde, was too like his maister, and much contrary to his wifes minde: but the godly woman through seruencie of her zeale and

stancie ouercame this let.

M A T. 2. *Great multitudes resorted to him.* It is not in vaine that the Euangelists doe speake of the great concourse of the people, because that Christ at the beholding of them, tooke occasion to compare his doctrine to seed. The multitude was come together out of many places, they stood doubtfull what to doe, they had all like greedy desire to heare, but they had not like affection to profit. This was the occasiō of the parable, to teach that the seed of the doctrine is not fruitfull euery where, though it be sowed far & wide. For it alwaies findeth not a fruitfull and well appointed earth. Christ therefore professeth himselfe in that, to be like to a Husband man, which goeth forth to sowe: but that many of his hearers are like to hard and drie earth: others like thorny ground, so that both labour and seed are lost. But I will leaue of further entreating of the meaning of this Parable, vntill we come to the exposition which the Lord himselfe maketh a little after. Onely for this present the readers are to bee admonished of this, if they be found like to vnprofitable and barren earth, which out of farre places come as men starued to Christ: it is no maruell if the Gospell do not at this day bring forth fruit in many, wherof some are slacke and slow, other heare negligently, and others are scarce drawne to heare.

9. *He that hath eares.* Christ doth by these wordes declare, partly that all are not endued with true vnderstanding to conceiue that which he speaketh: and partly he stirreth vp his disciples, that they should more diligently consider that the doctrine is neither easie nor meete for euery man. And he so distinguisheth betweene hearers, as if some could heare, and others were deafe. Now if it be demaunded whereof it cometh, that the former haue eares to heare: the scripture testifieth in Psal. 40. 6. that no man can make and frame himselfe eares of his owne industry, but that they are prepared of the Lord,

10. *Then the disciples came, and said vnto him.* It appeareth by Matthewes wordes, that the disciples had not onely respecte of themselues, but had also a care and regard of others. When they perceiued not the meaning of the parable, they knewe that it was much harder to the people: therefore they complaine that Christe had spoken such wordes, as the hearers reaped no profit by. Also though similitudes do commonly make that matter plaine which is in hand, yet they which containe a continuall Metaphore, are very obscure & hard. Therefore Christ propounding this similitude, couered that vnder an Allegory, which he could haue spoken more plainly and fully with out a figure. But now where he expoundeth it, the figuratiue speach is more plaine and more pithy, then that which is simply spoken without a figure. that is, it is not onely more effectuall to moue the mindes, but also plainer. It is good therefore to consider, how and in what order euery thing is spoken.

11. *It is giuen to you, to knowe the mysteries.* By this answer of Christe wee doe gather that GOD proposeth the doctrine of saluation to menne for diuers ends. For Christe declareth that he spake so darkely of purpose, that his wordes might seeme harde vnto many, and shoulde onely beate their eares with a confused and doubtfull sounde. If any manne shall obiecte to the contrary, that saying of Isaias, 45. 19. I haue not spoken in secrete, neyther

ther in a darke corner: I sayd not in vaine to the seede of Iacob: seeke you me: or those commendations which David doeth giue of the law, Psalme 119. 19. that it is a lantern to the secte, and giueth wise come to the simple: the answer is ready and easie, the word by the owne nature is alwayes light, but the light of it is dimmed wth the darknesse of men. For though the lawe was couered as with a vaile, yet the trueth of God was euident to be seene in the same, if the eyes of many had not beene blind. Paule witnesseth truly of the Gospell, 2. Cor 4. 4. that it is not hid but from the reprobate, & them that are ordained to destruction, whose mindes Sathan hath blinded. Also this is to be knowne, that the force of lightning whereof David maketh mention, & the familiar kind of teaching which Isai speaketh of is properly referred to the chosē people. Yet this alwayes remaineth certaine and sure that the word of God is not obscure, but as the world with her owne blindness darkeneth it: but yet the Lorde reserueth his mysteries, so that the reprobate cannot come to the vnderstanding of them. And he deprieth them of the light of his doctrine two waies, for sometime he speaketh that in parables, which might haue beene spoken more plainly: sometime he opening his minde plainly without darke speeches and figures he dulleth their senses, and amaseth them, so that they cannot see in the midde day. To this purpose pertaineth those horrible threats in Isai, 28. 11, where he threateneth that he would be a stranger to the people, & that he would speake with a straunge and vknowne language: that the visions of the prophetes, should be to the learned as a booke shutte and sealed, wherein they could not read, Isa. 29. 11, and where the booke should be opened, they should be all as idyotes, and stay as menne amased that cannot reade. Now sith Christ so dispensed his doctrine of purpose, that it should profit onely a few, in whose minds it should bee thoroughly settled: and that it should hold other some in suspence and in doubt: it followeth that the doctrine of saluation was not deliuered by God to men for one end and purpose, but it is so ordered by his wonderfull counsell, that it should be to the reprobate a sauour of death to death, as to the elect a liuely sauour to life. And least any manne should be so bolde as to murmur against it, Paule answereth in these wordes whatsoeuer the effect of the Gospell be, yet the sauour of it, though it be deadly doeth alwayes smell sweetely before God. But that the meaning of this present place may be the better vnderstoode, it behoueth vs to sift more narrowly the purpose of Christ, for what cause and to what end he spake this. First, the comparifon vndoubtedly tendeth to this ende, that Christ might amplyfie & set forth the grace and sauour which he sheweth to his disciples: because that was specially giuen to them, which was not generally allowed to all. If any mane shoulde demaunde from whence the apostles had this dignitie and priuiledge: certainly the cause shall not be found in them: and Christe by sayinge that it was giuen them excludeth all merite and desert. Christe affirmeth them to bee appoynted and chosen menne, whome God hath especially vouchsafed this honour, that he should reueale his secretes vnto them, and that other shoulde be voide and without this grace. There is no other cause of this difference to be found, but that God callet h vnto him, them that he hath freely chosen,

2. *For who soeuer hath:* Christ persecuteth that which I spake euen now: for he admonisheth his disciples, how liberally God dealeth with them, that they might make so much the more account of this grace, and acknowledge themselves the more bound, for that they had received a greater benefit then other. He rehearseth these same wordes in an other place, but in an other sense, for there hee speaketh of the lawfull vse of gi'tes: but now he simply teacheth, that there is more bestowed vpon the Apostles, then vpon the common sort of men, because that the heauenly father woulde in this sort abundantly heape vp his bountifull kindnes towards them: for because that he neuer forsaketh the works of his owne hands, as it is sayd in the Psalme, 138. 8. whom hee once beginneth to make, he beautifieth dayly more and more, vntill at length he bringeth them into great perfection. For this cause doth there flow so manifolde graces from him to vs: hereof come so ioyfull proceedings, because the beholding the G O D of their deliuerance, prouoketh a continuall course of bountifullnesse. And as his riches are innumerable, so he is neuer weary of enriching his children. Therefore as oft as hee listeth vs vpp higher, wee ought to remember that what benefites soeuer we receiue dayly, they come out of that fountayne, that he would performe that worke of our saluation begon in vs. But on the contrary part, Christ affirmeth that the reprobate doe alwayes become worse, vntill they being altogether come to naught, doe faint in their owne weaknes. This seemeth to be a hard speech, that there should bee taken from the wicked, that which they haue not: but Luke mittigateth the hardnes, and taketh away the ambiguitie, by altering the words somewhat: saying, that those things shall be taken away, which they seeme to haue. And certainly, it faileth commonly out that the reprobate doe excell in many excellent gi'tes, and in shew are like to the children of God. But there is no soundnesse in them, because the minde is voide of godlinesse, and there appeareth onely a vaine shewe. Wherefore Mathew doth rightly say that they haue nothing, because it is accounted as nothing before God, and in their conscience it is vaine and vnfruitfull. Luke doth aply declare that the gi'ts wherewith they were indued, were prophaned by them, so that they onely made a shew in the eyes of men, else they had nothing but a pompe and vaine-glorious brag. Hereby wee also learne to seeke profite every day of our life, because that God hath of this condition giuen vs the taste of his heauenly doctrine, that we might dayly bee more abundantly fed with the same, vntill we come to a perfect fulnes. Marke setteth downe this sentence somewhat more confusedly: Take heed, sayth the Lord, what is said vnto you. Then if they haue profited well, hee putteth them in hope of greater grace, to you (sayth he) that heare, shall more be giuen. Then followeth a clause which agreeth with Mathews wordes, but in the midst is there a sentence which I expounded before in the 7. chap. of Mathew, because it is not likely to be placed here in his owne order. For the Euangelists (as it is sayd other where) were not curious in setting downe Christi's sermons, but heaped oft diuers of his sentences together. But Luke setteth downe the same sentence in diuers places with other words which Christ spake, and also noteth the diuers causes why Christ so spake the same: namely, to make them attentive to his doctrine, least the word of life should passe forth in vaine, which ought to be receiued, and to take

rootes in our mindes, as if he should haue sayd: Take heede least that bee taken from you, which was giuen you, if it fructifie not.

13. *Therefore spake I to them in Parables.* He sayth that he spake obscurely to the multitude, because they could not bee partakers of the true light. Yet when he saith, that there is a vaile drawne ouer the blind, that they might remaine in their blindness, hee ascribeth the fault of this to them: but thereby hee the more commendeth the grace giuen to the Apostles, which was not in such sorte giuen commonly to all. And other cause he assigneth none, but the secret counsell of God, the reason whereof, though it be hid from vs, yet is was apparant to him, as wee shal hereafter more plainly appeare. And though parables haue an other ende, then to containe darke speeches, which God would not that they should be plainly made knowne. yet wee sayd that this which we haue now in hand, was so proposed by Christ, that by the continuance of the Allegorie, it was as a doubtfull riddle.

14. *So in them is fulfilled the Prophecie.* He confirmeth & proueth out of the prophesie of Isai, that it is no new thing, if many profite nothing by the worde of God, because that in times past the old people were founde in such great blindness. But this place of the Prophet is diuersly cited in the new Testament. For Paule Actes 28. 26. vpbraiding the Iewes for their obstinate malice, saith that they were therefore blinded, that they could not see the light of the Gospell, because they were bitter and rebellious against God. So he set downe the nearest cause which was to bee seene openly in the men. But in the Epistle to the Rom. 11. 7. he setteth downe the cause out of a higher & a more secret fountaine: for he teacheth that the remnants should be sau'd according to the grace of election: & that the rest were blinded, according as it is saide by Isaias, &c. the opposition there vsed is to be noted, for if the only free election of God saueth a remnant of the people: it followeth that all other do perish by the secret iudgement of God, but yet righteous. For who are those other which Paul opposeth to the remnants which were chosen, but they whom God would not should be sau'd? There is the like reason also in Iohn 22. 38. For he saith that there were many which beleeu'd not, because that no man beleeueth, but they to whome the arme of the Lord is reuealed. And presently after, he addeth, that they could not beleue, because it is writtten againe, Isa. 6. 9. he hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their hearts. Christ also had regard vnto this, when he referreth it to the secret counsell of God, that the truth of the gospell was not generally reuealed to all, but set forth a farre off vnder dark speeches, so that nothing was poured into the peoples mindes but grosser blindness. I doe alwayes graunt that whom soeuer God doth blind, they are found worthy of this plague: but because the next cause doth not appeare in the persons of the men, let this principle remaine alwaies certaine & sure, that they are lightned of God to saluation, and that by a singular gift, who God hath freely chosen. but all the reprobate are deprived of the light of life, whether God with draweth his word from them, or else holdeth their eyes and eares fast closed, that they should not heare nor see. Now we see how christ applyeth the prophesie of the prophet to the present cause *Hearings, yee shall heare*. The woordes of the Prophet are not recied, neither was it needfull: for it was sufficient for Christe to shewe that it was

no new nor strange example, if many be astonished at the word of God. The saying of the Prophet was this: Go blind their minds, and harden their hearts. Matthew referreth it to the hearers, that the fault of their blindness & hardnes might be laid vpon themselves: for the one of them cannot bee separated from the other, because that as many as are cast off into a reprobate sence, do willingly and of a conceived malice blind & harden themselves. Neither can it be otherwise, where as p spirit of God raigerneth not, wherby the elect are only ruled. Wherefore let this which is added be noted, that all they are out of their mind, which God lighteneth not with the spirit of adoption: & therefore they are rather blinded by the word of God, & yet the fault remaineth in the, because they are willingly blinded. But the ministers of the word may by this comfort themselves, if they haue not alwayes such successe of their labours as they desire: yea, if that may be so far from profiting by their doctrine, that they rather become the worse thereby. Namely, that the same thing befallenth vnto them, that the Prophet whom they do not excell had experience of. It were to be wished that all were brought to obey God, & it becōmeth them to apply and to labour to bring this to passe: yet let them not wonder, that the iudgement which was exercised in times past by the ministry of the Prophet, be also fulfilled at this day. But we must diligēly take heed, least p fruit of the gospel perish throug our default.

MA R. 12. *That they seeing, may not discern.* It sufficeth to note here breisly, that which is more largely entreated of other where, that the doctrine is not properly, nor by it selfe, nor of the owne nature the cause of the blindness, but by an accidentall meanes. For, as when the purblind come forth into the Sun, their eyes are more blinded, and that fault is not to bee imputed to the Sunne, but to their eyes: so the word of God blindeth & hardneth the reprobate: because it cometh through their owne wickednesse it is proper and naturall to themselves, & accidentall to the word.

Least at any time they should turne. This clause sheweth what profit we should haue by hearing & vnderstanding: namely, that men being turned to God, may by him be receiued againe into grace, & by ioyning his mercy, they may liue well & happely. Therefore the Lord would that his word should be preached especially for this end, that by renewing the mindes & hearts of men, hee might reconcile them to himselfe. But on the contrary side, I sai here sayeth of the reprobate, that a stony hardnes remaineth in them, least they should obtaine mercy, & that the effecte of the worde was taken away from them, least their heartes should tourne to repentance. Vnder this word healing, Matthew comprehendeth the deliuerance from all euilles, as the Prophet also doth. for they do Metaphorically compare a people afflicted by the hand of God, to a sicke manne. And when the Lord rehearseth his punishments, they say that he healeth. But because this health dependeth vpon forgiuenes of sins, Marke doth aptly & well set down the cause & fountaine. For whence proceedeth the imagination of punishments, but because the Lord being well pleased with vs, bestoweth his blessing vpon vs? And though that sometime after he hath forgiuen our sinne, he yet ceaseth not to punish vs, either that we may the more be humbled, or that we may be the more wary hereafter: yet because he sheweth some tokens of his fauour, he quickeneth and restoreth vs, then, because that for the moste

part the punishments are taken away with the sin : the healing is rightly ioyned with forgiveness. But it cannot be gathered of this, that repentance is the cause of forgiveness, as though God should receiue the repentant into fauour, because they deferred it : (for euen the conuersion it selfe, is a token of the free mercy and fauour of God) but it only noteth the order of things following the fauour of God : for God forgiveth sinnes onely in those men which are displeased with themselves.

M A T. 16. *But blessed are your eyes.* Luke seemeth to referre this saying to another time, yet it is easily answered, for he heapeth there many sentences together, not obseruing the course of the times. We will therefore follow the course which Mathewe holdeth who setteth downe more plainly the occasion why he spake it. For as of the singular grace bestowed vpon them, they were before admonished that the Lord exempting them from the common sort, did familiarly admit them to the mysteries of his kingdome : so now the same grace is extolled by an other comparison : to wit, that they are preferred before the old Prophets and the holy kings. And this is much more excellent then to be preferred before the vnteleuening multitude. Also Christ meaneth not euery hearing, nor simple seeing of the flesh : but he sayth that their eyes are blessed, because they see the glory due to the onely begotten Sonne of God, so that they acknowledg him to be the redeemer, because the liuely image of God appeared to the, wherby they should receiue saluation and perfect blessednesse. Then, because that which was said by the Prophets was fulfilled in them, that they should not learn euery man of his neighbour, but that they should be fully and perfectly taught of God. So is that obiection also answered, which might be gathered of an other saying of Christ, Iohn 20. 29. where he called them blessed which saw not, & yet beleueed : for there is noted an other maner of seeing : namely, such a seeing as Thomas desired, to serue his grosse affection. But the speech wherof Christ now speaketh, is common with the Apostles to the faithfull of all ages. For we not seeing, and not hearing, doe heare and doe see Christ : because that in the Gospell, as Paul sayth, 2. Cor. 3. 18. he appeareth vnto vs face to face, that we might be changed into his image : and the perfection of wisdom, righteousness, and of life, which was once giuen in him, shineth therein daily.

L V. 24. *And kings haue desired to see.* The present estate of the Church may well be accounted better, then the estate of the holy fathers which liued vnder the law to whom that was shewed, but vnder shadowes and cloudes, which now appeareth plainly in the open face of Christ, For the vaile of the temple being rent, we doe enter by faith into the heavenly Sanctuarie, and therby we haue a free access to God. For though the fathers content with their lot, nourished a blessed peace in their minds, yet this hindered them not, but that they were caried further in their desires. So Abraham saw, Iohn 8. 56 the day of Christ a farre off, and he reioyced. yet he desired to haue a nearer sight, but he obtained not his desire. For Simeon spake according to the desire of them all, when he sayd, Luke. 2. 29. Now let thy seruât depart in peace. And it could not otherwise be, when vnder the burden of the curse, whereby mankind was oppressed, the y were all enslaved with a desire of the promised deliuerance. Therefore we know, that as famished people they hungred after Christe, and yet they had a stayed,

faith.

faith, that they grudged not against God, but patiently suspended their desires vntill the full time of his revealing.

Mathew. 13.

18. Heare yee therefore the Parable of the sower.

19. When so euer a man heareth the word of the kingdom and vnderstandeth it not, the euill one cometh, and catcheth away that which was sown in his heart, and thus is hee which hath receiued the seede by the way side

20. And hee that receiued seede in a stony ground, is hee which heareth the word, and incontinently with ioy receiueith it.

21. Yet hath hee no roote in himselfe, and dureth but a season: for as soone as tribulation or persecution cometh, because of the worde: by and by he is offended.

22. And he that receiueith the seed among thornes, is he that heareth the word, but the care of this worlde, and the deceitfulness of riches choake the word, & he is made vnfruitful

23. But he that receiueith the seede in the good ground, is he that heareth the worde, and vnderstandeth it, which also beareth fruit, and bringeth forth, some an hundred fold, some sixtie fold, and some thirtie fold.

Marke 4.

13. Again hee sayd vnto them, perceiue yee not this parable? how then shoulde ye vnderstand all other parables?

14. The sower soweth the word.

15. And these are they that receiue the seede by the way side, in whome the worde is sown: but when they haue heard it, Sathan cometh immediately and taketh away the worde, that was sown in their hearts.

16. And likewise they that receiue the seede in stony ground, are they which when they haue heard the worde, straightway receiue it with gladnesse.

17. Yet they haue no roote in themselves, & endure but a time: for when trouble and persecution ariseth for the word, immediately they be offended. 18. Also, they that receiue the seede among the thornes, are such as heare the word. 19. But the cares of this world, and the deceitfulness of riches, and the lustes of other things enter in, and choake the word, and it is vnfruitfull.

20. But they that haue receiued seede in good ground, are they that heare the word, and receiue it, and bring forth fruit, one corne thirtie, another sixtie, and some an hundred.

Luke 8.

11. The parable is this: the seede is the worde of God.

12. And they that are beside the way, are they that heare: afterward cometh the deuill, & taketh away the word out of their heartes, least they shoulde beleue and be saued.

13. But they that are on the stones, are they which when they haue heard, receiue the word with ioy: but they haue no rootes, which for a while beleue, but in the time of temptation goe away.

14. And that which fell among thornes, are they which haue heard and after their departure are choaked with cares & with riches & voluptuous liuing, & bring forth no fruit.

15. But that which fell in good ground, are they which with an honest and good heart heare the worde and keep it, & bring forth fruit with patience.

M A T H. and Luke doe set downe the exposition of the Parable, as if that Christ had simply expounded it to his disciples without reproofing them: but in Marke he doth sharply reprove their slacknes, because that they which should become teachers of others, did not profit more then others. But the sum is, that the doctrine of the gospell being scattered abroad as seede, doth not bring forth fruit eury where, because it doeth not alwayes fall vpon fruitfull and good ground

ground. Hee rehearseth foure sortes of hearers, of whiche the first receiue no seede. The second sort seeme to receiue seede, but so, that it taketh no roote to liue by: in the third sort the corne is choaked: so there remaineth a fourth part which bringeth forth fruit. Not that of foure hearers one, or tenne of fortie, do embrace the doctrine, and bring forth fruite: fore it was not the purpose of Christe to appoynt a certaine definite number: nor to deuide them of whom he spake, into equall portions. but that there is not all waies one and the same increase of faith where the worde is sowed, but sometime in more aboundance, sometime in lesse: he onely teacheth them that through diuers faultes the seed of life perisheth in many, in whome it either presently corrupteth or wythereth, or by little and little degenerateth. But that we may profite the better by this admonition, it is to be noted that he maketh no mention of the despisers, which do openly withstand the word: but they only are noted here, in whome there seemeth to be some aptnesse to be taught. But if the greater part of these doeth vanish away, what shall becom of the rest of the world, from whom the doctrine of saluation is openly debared? Now I will cōeto the particular points.

19. *When soeuer a man heareth the word of the kingdom and vnderstandeth it not.* First he makeeth mention of barren and hard groundes, which receiue not the seede inwardly, because their heartes are not prepared. Such hee compareth to hard and dry earth, which is in the common hie way, which by continuall treading vpon, becommeth hard as pavement. I woulde wee had not so many of this sort at this day as wee haue, which though they offer themselves to heare, yet they stand as menne amazed, and feele no taste of it at all, and to speake in fewe wordes, they differ little from blockes or stones, wherefore it is no maruell if they vanishe altogether away. Christ sayeth that the worde was sown in their heartes, which though it bee an improper speache, yet it is not without reason, for the sinne and wickednesse of menne taketh not away the nature from the wordes, but it retaineth still the force of seede. And that is diligently to be noted, least wee shoulde thinke that the graces of God lost their forces, though they bee not effectuell in vs. For in respect of God, the wordes is sown in their heartes, but the heartes of all doe not receiue with mekenesse that which is grafted in them, as Iames exhorteth, 1. 21. The Gospell therefore is alwayes in power a fruitfull seede, but not in deede. In Luke it is added, that the deuill taketh away the seede out of their heartes, least they beleeuing should be sau'd. Whereby we gather, that as hungry birdes behaue themselves in seedes time, so as soone as the doctrine is deliuered, this enemy of our saluation is present, & laboureth by violence to take the same away, before it can take moysture and bring forth fruit. This also is no small prayse of sayth, in that it is called the cause of our saluation.

20. *Hee that receiueith seede in the stony groundes.* This sorte differeth from the former, for the temporall sayth, or faith for a season, as a conceiuing of seede, promisseth some fruite at the beginning: but their heartes are not so well and thoroughly brought in order, as may suffice to giue continuall nourishment to the same.

Of this sorte of menne also wee see too many at this day, which doe
Z greedily

greedely embrace the Gospel which shortly after doe waxe faint, because there is no liuely affection in them to strengthen and continue them in constancie. Wherefore let euery man examine himselfe thoroughly, least his hastinesse, which giueth a great shewe, speedily vanish (as men say) as a flame of stubble. For except the woorde doe thoroughly pearce the whole harte, and take deepe rootes in the same the faith cannot haue continuall moysture to maintaine the same to continue. This readinesse is worthy to be praised, in that they receiue the word of God as soone as it is vttered, and that without delay and with ioy: yet we must know that it is to no purpose, vntil that faith shall gather a perfect strength, least it wither in the first springing. As for example, Christ sayeth: that they which are such, are offended with the trouble of persecution. And certainly, as the barrennesse of the ground, is tried by the heat of the sunne: so persecution and affliction discovereth their vanitie, which are lightly touched, I know not with what affection, and are not well endued with an earnest desire of godlynesse. Such are called by Mathewe and Marke temporisers, not onely because they professing themselves to be Christes disciples for a time, and after fall away into temptation, but because they seeme also to themselves to haue a true faith, and therefore in Luke Christ sayeth that they beleue for a time, because that honour which they giue to the gospel, is like to faith. Yet notwithstanding it is to be noted that they are not truly regenerate with incorruptible seede, which neuer fadeth as Peter teacheth, 1. Pet. 1. 4 for that saying of Isaias. 40. 8. The word of our God shall stand for ever, is fulfilled in the hearts of the faithfull, in whome the trueth of God once setled, neuer fadeth away, but flourisheth euen to the end. Yet they which do louingly and with some reuerence receiue the word of God, they doe beleue after a sort: because they differ from the vnbeleeuers, which either will not giue credite to God when he speaketh, or despiseth his worde. Onely let vs knowe that none are partakers of true faith, but they which being sealed with the spirit of adoption, do cal God father from their heart. Also, as that spirit is neuer extinguished: so it is impossible that the faith which it hath once engraued in the hearts of the godly, should vanish away and perish.

22. *Hee that receiueth the seede among thornes.* In the third place he reheareth them which were inwardly apt to nourish the seede sowne, if they suffered not the same otherwise to be corrupted and spoyled. Christ compareth the pleasures of the world as euill desires, conetousnesse and other affections of the flesh to thornes. Though Mathew onely mentioneth the cares of the worlde with conetousnesse: but the meaning is all one, for vnder this word is comprehended the baies of pleasures (whereof Luke maketh mention) and all kinde of euill desire. For as thornes and other noysome weedes doe choake vpp the corne, which woulde otherwise prosper and growe vpp: so the wicked affections of the flesh preuaile in the hartes of menne, and ouergrow their faith, so that they ouerwhelme the force of the heauenly doctrine, which is not yet ripe. And though the euill desires doe possesse the heart of manne, beefore the worde of the Lorde make any shewe there, yet they seeme not to beare any rule at the first. But after the corne groweth, and promiseth to yeelde fruite, then growe they vp aloft. Therefore all men must diligently apply themselves, to roote vppe the thornes out of their hartes, least the worde

of God be choaked: for there is no man which is not filled with great abundance of thornes, as with a thicke wood. And certainly we see very few come to ripeness, because scarce the tenth man applyeth himselfe to roote them vp, no, nor to loppe and cut them. And the great abundance which should moue menne to be more diligent, causeth many to be more carelesse. Christ vseth the phrase of deceitfulness of riches for covetousnesse. And he purposely calleth riches, beguilefull or deceitfull, that men might thereby learne the rather to take heed & to beware of their snares. But let vs remember that as many affections as there be of our flesh, the abundance and varietie whereof is innumerable, so many lettes and hindrances there are to corrupt the seed of life.

23. He that receiveth the seede in the good ground. Christ compareth them only to good and fruitfull ground in whom the worde of God not onely taketh root, and those deepe and found, but which doe also overcome all lettes, least they should hinder the fruite of the same. If any man object that there can not any be found, void and free from thornes, the answer is easie, Christ speaketh not here of perfection of sayth, but only sheweth in whome the word doth fructifie. Therefore though the fruite be but small, yet whosoever degenerateth not from the sincere worship of God is counted good and fruitfull ground. It behooveth vs to be diligent in rooting vp of thornes, but because that wee shall never bring to passe, no not by our daily labour, but that some remnants will alwayes remaine, yet let every one of vs endeavour to mortifie & to kill them, least they hinder the fruite of the worde. That which followeth next, where Christ teacheth that all bring not forth fruit in like measure, confirmeth this sentence. For though the fruitfulness of that ground which bringeth forth fruite in thirty folde, is but small in comparison of a hundred folde, yet we see that Christ joyneeth all those groundes together, which doe not altogether deceiue the labour and hope of the husband man. And we are hereby taught not to despise them, which grow not to great excellencie, when the housholder himselfe, though he preferre some one above the rest in respect of his high estate, yet he vouchsafeth the common shew of his favourable goodnesse, also towards the inferiours. But Hierome wresteth very fondly these three degrees to virgins, widows and wives, as though the fruite which the Lord requireth of vs, were only tyed to virginity, and that the godlinesse of the married were not oft more plentifull in bringing forth all fruite of righteousness. This is also to be noted by the way, that Christ speaketh not hyperbolically of encrease of a hundred fold, for there were divers regions at that time so fruitfull, as it appeareth by many Historyographers, which were eye witnesses of the same.

Matthew 13.

Mark,

Luke.

24. An other parable put he forth unto them, saying: The kingdom of heaven is like unto a man, which sowed good seede in his field.

25. But while men slept, there came his enemy, and sowed Tares among the wheat, and went his way.

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26. And

26. And when the blade was sprong vp, and brought forth fruite, then appeared the Tares also.

27. Then came the seruantes of the housholder, and sayde vnto him: maister, sowedst not thou good seede in thy field? from whence then hath it Tares? 28. And hee sayd vnto them. The enuious man hath done this. Then the seruante sayd vnto him: wilt thou that wee goe & gather them vp? 29. But he sayd: nay, least while yee goe about to gather the Tares, ye plucke vp also with the wheat. 30. Let both grow together vntil the haruest, & in time of haruest, I will say vnto the reapers: Gather ye first the Tares, and binde them in sheaues to burne them: but gather the wheat into my barne.

Somewhat after.

36. Then sent Iesus the multitude away, & went into the house. And his disciples came vnto him, saying: declare to vs the parable of the Tares of the field. 37. The answered he and sayd vnto them: he that soweth the good seede, is the sonne of manne. 38. And the field is the world, and the good seed they are the children of the kingdom, and the Tares are the children of the wicked. 39. And the enemy that soweth them, is the deuill, and the haruest is the end of the world, and the reapers be the Angels. 40. As then the Tares are gathered and burned in the fire, so shall it be in the end of the world. 41. The sonne of man shall send forth his Angels, & they shall gather out of his kingdom all things that offend, and them which do iniquity. 42. And shall cast them into a furnace of fire, there shall be wailing and gnashing of teeth. 43. Then shall the iust men shine as the sunne in the kingdom of their father. Hee that hath eares to heare, let him heare.

That we may profite by this parable, it is worth the labour to consider to what purpose Christ applyeth it. Some thinke, least the confused multitude should flatter themselves in the outward profession of the Gospel, that he sayd, that in his field there is often mixed bad seede with the good, but that a day shoulde come wherein Tares should be separated from the wheat. And therefore they ioyne this parable with the last, as if they both had one cause and one end. But to mee it seemeth otherwise: for hee doth therefore make mention of the separation, least the mindes of the godly should waxe faint with wearines, in beholding the confused mixture of the good with the euill: for though christ hath cleansed his Church with his blood, that it should be without wrinkle and spot: yet he suffereth many faultes to remaine.

I speake not of the remnantes of the infirmities of the fleshe, to which all the faithfull are subiecte, after they are regenerate by the spirite of God.

But

But assoone as Christe hath gathered a little flocke vnto himselfe, many hypocrites insinuate themselues, peruerse men creepe in, and many wicked men thrust themselues in: and so it commeth to passe, that the holy company which Christ had separated vnto himselfe, is polluted with many filthy pollutions. Also this seemeth to be very absurde vnto many, thareither vngodly or prophane, or wicked men should be nourished in the bosome of the Church. Furthermore there are many which vnder pretence of zeale are more frowarde then neede, if all things be not ordered according to their desire: because there doeth not appeare an absolute puritie, they doe either tumultuously depart from the Church, or else they ouerthrow and destroy the same through their outrageous rigour. Wherefore in my iudgement this is the simple meaning of the parable. So long as the Church wandreth in this world, there shall hypocrites and wicked men be mixt with the good & sincere in the same, that the children of God might arme themselues with patience, and hold theyr faith strong and sure, amongest the offences with which they might be troubled. And it is a most apte comparison whē the Lord calleth the Church his fiede, because the faithfull are the seede of the same. And though that Christ doeth say afterward that the fiede is the worlde, yet without doubt he properly applied this name to his Church, whereof he began his speech. But because he was to drawe his plough through all the coastes of the world, and till fields for himselfe in the whole world, and sowe the seede of life in the same, he applied that by a figure to the worlde, which rather agreed to a part of the same. Now it is to bee noted what is meant by wheat, and what by the Tares. This cannot be vnderstoode of the doctrine, as if he should haue sayde, where soeuer the Gospell is preached, it is presently corrupted and defiled with wicked inuētions: for Christ would neuer haue forbid them to labour strongly in purging such a corruption. Neither was it lawfull for them to deale in this, as in the manners of men, to tolerate those vices which they could not punish: for so it should be lawfull to beare with wicked errorres, which ouerthrowe the purity of faith. Then Christe taketh away the doubt, when hee doeth by name call the tares, the children of the wicked. Yet againe it is to be noted, that this cannot be simply vnderstoode of the persones of men as if God in the creation had sowed good men, and the deuill euill men. Which thing I doe therefore giue warning of, because the Maniches haue abused this place, that they might cast a colour vpon their fained deuice of two beginnings. But we knowe that what soeuer corruption is in the deuill, or in menne, the same is nothing else but a corruption of founde and pure nature. Therefore as God maketh not his electe (whiche are infected with originall sinne) good seede by creation, but regenerateth them by the grace of the spirit: so the deuill createth not euil menne, but depraueth them that were created of God, and thrusteth into the fiede of the Lorde, to defile the pure seede.

36. *Hee that soweth good seede.* Hee had sayde before, that the kingdome of heauen was like to a sower, but vnproperly. Yet the sense is euident, that the same doeth ofte befall in the preaching of the Gospell, as in the sowing of the fieldes, that the Tare ouer groweth the Wheate. But hee setteth downe one speciall thing: saying, that the fiede was sowed with Tares by the deceite of the enemy: that wee might knowe that this came not by

chaunce nor naturally, that many wicked men should mixe themselves amongst the faithfull, as if they were all one corne: but lette vs learne to impute the faulte to this mischeife of the Deuill, not that the condemning of him shoulde deliuer menne from guiltinesse, but firste that wee lay no faulte vpon God for this offence befalling to his Church: then that wee wonder not that Tares doe growe vpe in the Lordes fielde: sith Sathan doeth allwayes watche to annoy it. Also, it is not without reason that Christe sayeth not that the Ministers of the woordes doe sowe, but himselfe onely. For though it be not conuenient that this be restrained to his person, yet because he vseth our helpe, and applyeth vs as instruments in tilling of his fielde, so that hee alone worketh by vs and in vs, hee doth rightly challenge that to himselfe, which after a sorte is common vnto his Ministers. Therefore let vs remember that the Gospell is not onely preached by the commandement of Christ, but by his directions and guiding, that wee should bee as his hands, and he as the onely authour of the worke.

39. *The haruest is the ende of the worlde.* This is a very troublesome estate, that the Church should be loaden with the reprobate to the ende of the world: yet Christ doth therefore prescribe vs this time to prepare vs to patience, least we should feede our selues with vaine hope. It behooueth the pastours diligently to apply themselves to the purging of the Church, and in this behalfe al good men are to helpe them so farre as their calling will suffer. But when all menne haue generally put to their helping handes, yet they shall not profite so much as vtterly to purge away all filth from the Church. Therefore we must note that the purpose of Christ was nothing lesse, then by sufferance to nourish sinnes: His onely purpose is to exhorthe the faithfull that they should not fainte: because they are compelled to haue the wicked amongst them: Then it doth also serue to bridle and to moderate their zeale, which thinke it not lawfull to keepe companie but with pure Angels. The Anabaptistes also and such like, haue wickedly abused this Text, that they might driue away the vse of the sword from the Church. But the answer is easily made: for sith they themselves doe admitte excommunication, which rooteth out the wicked and reprobate for a time, why should not the godly Magistrates exercise the sword against the wicked, so oft as neede shall require? They take exception against this, saying: that in the one there is space giuen for repentance, which is not where the punishment of death is. As though the theefe found not comfort of saluation vpon the crosse. But let this answer suffice, Christ speaketh heere, neither of the office of Pastours nor of Magistrates: but hee applyeth himselfe to take away the offence wherewith the weake are troubled, while they see the Church gathered, not onely of the elect, but of the filthy dregges of the wicked.

Thereapers bee the Angelles. This worde may bee applyed to this present purpose. The reapers in the fourth Chapter of Iohn, and the eighte and thirtie verse, are sayde to bee the Apostles, in respecte of the Prophetes, because they entered into their labours. And the commaundement is inioyned and giuen to all the Ministers of the woordes, that they shoulde bring forth fruite to the Lorde, which shoulde alwayes remaine, Iohn 15. 16. To the which shal also appertayneth, that the corne waxeth white, Iohn

4. 35. and requireth the reapers : Also the haruest is great, but the labourers are fewe, Matthew 9. 37. But here is an other cause of this comparison: for they are sayde to bee planted in the field of the Lorde, which occupie a roomth in the Church. Neither is that any Obiection, that Christe in the thirde Chapter of Matthewe, and the twelfth verse, is sayde (asloone as hee commeth forth with his Gospell) to have a Fanne in hande, wherewith hee woulde purge his floure. For there is described the beginning of the purging of the same, which hee sayeth cannot be brought to passe before the last day: for then it shall bee thoroughly performed in all poyntes. But though hee will then at last put his hand to purge the Church by Angelles, yet hee beginneth now to doe the same by godly teachers. Further more, hee attributeth these thinges to the Angelles, because they shall not stand idle at his tribunall seate, but they shall offer themselves to execute his commaundementes. They therefore which doe hasten preposterously to ouertourne whatseuer doth displease them, doe preuent the iudgement of Christe, as much as it lyeth in them, and by taking away the office from the Angelles they doe rashly vsurpe it themselves.

41. *They shall gather out of his kingdome.* That which followeth of all them which doe iniquitie, is not any thinge diuers, but as an exposition of the former wordes, as if hee should haue sayde, that the time will then bee ripe and ready, wherein all thinges shall bee restored into their lawfull order, and so the wicked shall be taken away, which are now the offences. And they are so called because they doe not onely liue wickedly to themselves, but they weaken the faith of many, others they hinder from a right course, some they doe vtterly overthrowe, others they cast downe headlong. By this we may take a profitable admonition, least we being compassed about with so many offences, should goe forward slouthfully and carelessly, but that we shoulde earnestly and diligently bend our selues to take heed. Their nicenesse is here also reprooued, which are so dainty, that they turne backe from their course, for euery small offence. It is hard for them I graunt, which are conuersant amongst many offences, not to stumble at the same, yea, and sometime to fall, but their mindes must bee strengthened and comforted with hope: because it is not to be doubted but that the Sonne of God, who commandeth his to goe through the middelt of offences, will also giue strength to overcome them all.

Hee also pronounceth a horrible iudgement against all hypocrites, & reprobate, which seeme now to be cheife Citizens in the Church, least they shoulde lay them downe in rest, in their vainglorious boasting. That Phrase of a fiery furnace, is a Metaphoricall speech. For as the excellency of the glory which is layd vp for the children of God, doeth exceede further beyond all our senses, then can bee expressed with any wordes: so the iudgement and punishment which remaineth for the reprobate, because it is incomprehensible, is set forth by a shadowe, according to the measure of our capacitie: the ignorance wherof, made the Sophisters turmoyle themselves in vaine, in disputations of noweight, as we haue already touched other where.

I knowe that some haue prosecuted more subtilly euery particular clause
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of the same : but because it is to be feared least such subtleties which are not of any sound foundation, shoulde leade vs to follies, I had rather deale more sparingly in such things, being contente with the simple and plaine meaning. If they that are so much delighted with such curiositie, shoulde be demaunded how the deuill should sowe Tares amongst the good seede, while Christ slepte & knew it not, they haue not any thing to answere to it yet I haue endeouored my selfe to bee sparing in these matters, so that I would not omitte any thing worthy and profitable to be knowne.

43. *Then shall the iust manne shine.* A notable comfort, that the children of God which nowe lie either ouerwhelmed with filth, or are hidde as people of no reputation, or are assaulted with reproofes and slaunders, shall then (as in a cleare skie, when all cloudes are scattered away) once shine cleare and freshly to bee beholden. And the Aduerbe of time, *Then* is very forcible, for it contayneth a secret opposition of the present state, and of the last day, in hope whereof Christe comforteth all his faithfull ones. The meaning there of is, though many wicked ones doe now flourish alofte in the Church, yet we must certainly hope for that happy day wherein the Sonne of G O D will extoll his children, and will wipe away all filthe, wherewith their beauty is nowe ouerwhelmed. It is true that the glory to come is promised to none, but them in whome the Image of G O D now shineth, and which through continuall degrees of glory are transformed into the same : but because the life of the godly is nowe hidde, and their saluation is inuisible, because it consisteth in hope : Christe doeth woorthily call them backe into heauen, that the faithfull may enioy the glory promised them. And it is not to bee doubted, but that hee had respecte vnto the place of Daniell, that hee might thereby the rather touch his hearers to the quicke. As if hee shoulde haue sayde, whereas the Prophet preacheth of the excellent brightnesse to come, hee noteth withall a temporall darkenesse : and therefore that this Prophecie may haue place, the mixture which wrappeth and encloseth the elect of God with the reprobate for a time must bee borne with patience. Hee maketh not an equalitie in comparing this glory of the Sunne to the light. For as Christ doeth now distribute his giftes diuersly amongst the faithfull, so will hee also crowne the same in the last day. But that must bee remembred, that I sayde, that the restoring or renewing which is deferre to the latter coming of Christe, is onely compared with the mistie and cloudie estate of the worlde. The kingdome of the father as the inheritance of the godly is opposed against the earth, that they might remember that they are pilgrimes in the same, and so that they might aspire to heauen. For though the kingdome of God is said elsewhere to bee in vs, yet wee shall not fully enioy the same, vntill God bee all in all.

March. 13.

Marke. 4.

Luke. 13.

31. Another Parable hee put forth vnto them, saying: *the kingdome of heauen is like vnto.*

26. Also he sayde, so is the kingdom of God, as if a man should cast seed in the ground. 27. And.

18. Then sayd he, what is the kingdome of God like? or whereto shall I compare it? 19. It.

vnto a graine of musterd seede which a man taketh and soweth in his field.

32. Which indeede is the least of all seedes : but when it is growne, it is the greatest among hearbes, & it is a tree, so that the birdes of heauen come and bygilde in the braunches thereof.

33. An other parable spake he to them, The kingdome of heauen is like to leauen, which a woman taketh, and hideth in three peckes of meale, till all bee leavened.

34. All these things spake Iesus vnto the multitude in parables, and without parables spake he not to them.

35. That it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Prophet, saying, I wil open my mouth in parables, and will utter the things, which haue bene kepte secreete from the foundation of the worlde.

27. And should sleepe, & rise vp night and day, & the seed should spring and grow vp, hee knoweth not howe. 28. For the earih bringeth forth fruit of her selfe: first, the blade, then the eares after that full corne in the eares.

29. And as soone as the fruite sheweth it selfe, anon he putteth in the sickle : because the haruest is come. 30. He said moreover, whereunto shal we liken the kingdome of God? or with what comparison shall we compare it?

31. It is like a graine of musterd seede, which when it is sowne in the earth, is as the least of all seedes that be in the earth.

32. But after that it is sowne it groweth vp, and is the greatest of all hearbes, and beareth great braunches: so that the fowles of the heauen may bygilde vnder the shadow of it.

33. And with many such parables he preached the word vnto the, as they were able to beare it.

34. And without parables spake hee nothing vnto them, but hee expounded all thinges to his disciples aparte.

19. It is like a graine of musterd seede, which a man tooke and sowed in his garde, & it grew & waxed a great tree, and the fowles of the heauen made nestes in the braunches thereof.

20. And againe hee said, whereunto shall I liken the kingdom of God? 21. It is like leauen, which a woman tooke and hid in three peckes of flour, till all was leavened.

22. And hee wente through all cities and townes, teaching and iourneying towards Ierusalem.

By these parables Christe encourageth his Disciples, least they being offended with the small and base beginniges of the Gospell shoulde giue backe. We see how proudly prophane men doe despise and scorne the Gospell, because it is brought by meane and simple ministers : because it is not receiued with the liking of the whole worlde, but hath a fewe disciples, and them for the most part men of no estimation nor reputation, euen of the common people. Whereby it commeth to passe, that the weake doe dispayre of successe, which they measure by the beginniges. But the Lorde beginneth his kingdome purposefully of meane and contemptible beginniges: so that the proceedings being such, as were not to be hoped for, doe the better set forth his power. Therefore the kingdome of God is to be compared to a graine of musterd seede, which is the least amongst seedes : yet it encreaseth into such a height, that it becometh a tree, wherein birdes do build their nestes. It is also compared to leauen, which though it be but small, doth yet so spread the force of the same, so that a

great heape of meale be leauened therewith. If therefore the shew of the kingdom of Christ be contemptible to the eyes of fleshe and blood, let vs learne to life vppe our mindes to the great and inestimable power of God, which as it once created all thinges of nothing, so it dooth daily rayse vppe those thinges, which are not about the measure of mans vnderstanding: and let vs let alone the proude men, with their doggish scornings, vntill the Lord amaze them before they looke for it. In the meane season let not vs bee faint harted, but let vs aryse by sayth against the pride of the worlde, vntill the Lord shew forth the wonderfull testimony of his power, whereof he speaketh here. The word leauen is sometime taken in the worst parte, as when Christe warneth to take heede of the leauen of the Scribes: in like maner, when Paule teacheth, 1. Cor. 5. 6. that a little leauen sowreth a whole lump. But here is simply to be nored the applying of it to the present cause. Of the kingdom of God, & of the kingdom of heauen wee haue spoken other where.

M A R. 26. *So is the kingdome of God.* Though this similitude tendeth to the same purpose, that the two former doe, yet Christe seemeth earnestly to apply his speech to the ministers of his word, least they shoulde waxe colde in their office: because the fruite of their labour doeth not presently appeare. Therefore he setteth before them the husband-men to follow, which in hope of a time to reape, doe cast the seede into the earth, and are not vexed with greedynesse, which neuer is at quiet, but they goe to rest, and arise againe: that is, they doe ordinarily apply their daily labour, & refresh themselues with their nightly rest, vntill the corne waxe ripe at length in the due time. Therefore though the seede of the word lie hid for a time, as if it were choaked or drowned, yet christ commaundeth the Godly teachers to be of good comfort, least distrust shoulde abate their diligence.

M A T. 34. *All these thinges spake he vnto them.* Although Marke sayeth expressly that Christ spake vnto them, as they were able to heare: yet it seemeth probable to me, that he vsed not these continual parables so much for instructiō sake, as to make the hearers attentiu and more apt for an other time. For why did hee expound the same familiarly to his disciples apart from the people? Was it because they were more ignorant then the common people? Nay verily: for his will was familiarly to deliuer his meaning and his minde vnto them, but he left others in suspence, vntill they should become more apt & ripe for the same. For these were but onely certaine entraunces into the Gospell, the fuller and plainer shew and declaration of the same hee deferred vnto a time more fit for the same. But the shewe of repugnancie, which seemeth to bee betwene this saying of Matthe and the prophesie of Isaiah, which was alledged a little before, is easily answered. For though he kept backe the light of the doctrine from the reprobate, yet not withstanding this, he so applied himselfe to their capacitie, that he thereby made them inexcusable. Therefore hee followed that kinde of teaching, which hee knew to be apt and agreeable for his hearers, whom hee knew to be not yet sufficiently prepared to learne.

35. *That it might bee fulfilled.* Matthe we meaneth not that the Psalm which hee citeth, is a peculiar Prophesie of Christe: but as the maiestie of the

the spirit shone in the wordes of the Prophet: euen so was the force of the same set forth in the wordes of Christ. The Prophet beginning to speake there of the couenant of God, whereby he adopted the seede of Abraham, of his dayly benefits towards that people, and of the whole gouernement of the Church, he beginneth with great maiestie the Psalm 78. 2. I will open my mouth in parables: that is, I will not speake of light trifles, but I will speake wisely of most earnest matters. Hee meaneth the same also by hard sentences: for this repetition is commonly vsed in the Psalm. The word heere first vsed by the Hebrewes, signifieth comparisons or resemblances: then they referre this word to graue sentences, because that similitudes for the most parte do adorne and set forth the wordes: the seconde worde there vsed, they doe call sometimes riddles or hard speeches, sometimes apothegmes. And though Matthew seemeth to allude to that word parable, yet is it not to be doubted, but that he meaneth that Christ spake figuratiuely, that the phrase of his speech being more notable then the common speech of the common sorte, might giue some dignitie and weight to the same. And he sayth, that that was fulfilled, which was written in the Psalm: for hee sayth, that he entreated of the secret misteries of God in Allegories and figures, least the doctrine should waxe vile. Wee doe also gather hereby, that there is no absurditie, that Christ spake more darkely to the people for diuerse endes. For though his will was to conceale that, which hee spake from the reprobate, yet hee applyed so his speech, that his wordes were full of heauenly and diuine maiestie, that men astonished, might perceiue the same.

L V. 22. *Tourneying towards Hierusalem.* It is doubtfull whether Luke spake of one only iourney, or whether he meaneth, when Christ had walked through Iudea, and had gone through the coastes thereof teaching, that hee was wont at the feastes to goe vp to Hierusalem. And in the former part of the sentence hee seemeth to note what was the continuall trade of Christes life after that he entered into the office inioyned him by the father. Wherefore, that the latter part may agree therewith, the meaning must be, that as oft as the feast dayes came, hee frequented the holy assemblies with others.

Mathevv. 13.

Marke

Luke

44. *Again, the kingdome of heauen is like vnto a treasure hid in the field, which when a man hath found, he hideth it, and for ioy thereof departeth, and selleth all that he hath and buyeth that field.*

45. *Again, the kingdome of heauen is like to a merchant man, that seeketh good pearles.*

46. *Who hauing found a pearle of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it.*

47. *Again, the kingdome of heauen is like vnto a draw nette, cast into the sea, that gathereth of all kinds of thinges.*

48. *Which, when it is full, men draw to land, & sit and gather the good into vessels, and cast the bad away.*

49. So shall it bee at the ende of the worlde, the Angelles shall goe forth, and seuer the bad from amongst the iust.

50 And shall cast them into a furnace of fire: there shalbe wailing and gnaſhing of teeth.

51. Iesus sayd vnto them, vnderstand yee all these thinges: They saide vnto him, yea, Lord.

52. Then said he vnto them, therefore euery Scribe, which is taught vnto the kingdome of heauen, is like vnto an housholder, which bringeth forth out of his treasure things both new and olde.

The two former similitudes tend to this end, to teach the faithfull to preferre the kingdome of heauen before the whole world, and therefore to renounce themselves and all the desires of the flesh, least they shuld be any way hindered from the obtaining of so great good. Also this admonition is very necessary for vs: for we are so enchanted with the deceitfull allurements of the world, that the heauenly life is not remembred: and because that we are carnall, the spirituall graces of God are the lesse esteemed of vs. Therefore doth Christ rightly extoll so much the excellencie of the eternall life, that it should not grieue vs to leaue for that, whatsoeuer otherwise wee esteemed to bee most deare vnto vs. First hee sayeth, that the kingdome of heauen is like to a hidden treasure. For as for the most part wee sette much by these things, which are apparant: and so the new and spirituall life, which is proposed in the Gospel is not regarded: because it lyeth hidde shut vp vnder hope. This therefore is a most apt comparison of treasure, whose value decayeth not, though it lye vnder the earth hidde and whelmed from the eyes of menne. By which words wee are taught that the riches of the spirituall grace of God are not to be accounted of by the view of our flesh, or by the outward shew of the same: but as a treasure, though it be hidde, is yet to bee preferred aboue most gorgeous riches. The other similitude doth likewise expresse the same. One pearle, though it bee but small, is yet so much esteemed, that a skilfull marchaunt doubteth not to sell his landes and houses, to buye the same. therefore though the wisdom of the fleshe apprehendeth not the excellencie of the heauenly life: yet we doe not consider of it, as the dignitie thereof requireth, except wee bee ready for that to deny those things, which shew gloriously before our eyes. Now, wee vnderstand the summe of both the parables: namely, that they are then apt to receiue the grace of the Gospel, which not regarding any other delights, doe wholly addicte themselves and their studies to the obtaining of the same.

It is to bee noted that Christe sayeth, not that the hidden treasure or pearle is so much esteemed of all menne, that they would sell all that they haue for it: but that the price is sette of the treasure, after it is founde and knowne: and that the skilfull marchaunte hath this estimation of the Pearle. For in these wordes is the knowledge of the sayth noted: as if Christe shoulde haue sayde, the common sorte make no account of the kingdome of heauen: because they are men without vnderstanding, and cannot see suffici-

sufficiently how incomparable a treasure the Lord offereth in the gospel. Yet it is demanded whether it be necessary to renounce all other good things for the enjoying of eternall life. I answer briefly, this is the simple meaning of the wordes, the Gospel hath not the honour due to it, except we preferre it above all the riches, delights, honours and commodities of the world: & that we being so far satisfied with the spirituall graces, which it promisseth, that we should neglect what things so euer do withdraw vs from the same. For it behooueth them to be loosed from all hindrances, which aspire into heauen. Therefore Christ doth not exhort his faithfull ones, but to the deniall of those things, which are lets to pietie: yet he graunteth them so to vse and to enjoy the temporall benefits of God, as if we vied them not.

46. *And he bought it.* Christ meaneth not by the word buying, that men should bring any recompence, whereby they might purchase to themselves the heavenly life: for we know vpon what condition the Lord calleth his faithfull people in Isa. 55. 1. Come and buy without siluer, &c. But though the heavenly life, & whatsoever pertaineth to the same be the free gift of God: yet we are said to buy the same, when we do willingly bridle the desires of the flesh, that wee be not thereby hindered from the obtaining of the same, as Paul saith Philip. 3. 8. that all things were to him as losse and dung, that he might winne Christ.

47. *It is like vnto a draw net.* Christ teacheth here no new thing, but confirmeth by another similitude that which we had before, that the Church of God is mixed with good and euill, so long as it is conuersant vpon the earth. Yet it may be, that the end of this parable is to another purpose: to witte, that Christ not onely remedieth the offence, which troubleth many weakelings, because that puritie is not founde in the worlde, which were to be wished: but also that hee might keepe his disciples in feare and modestie, least they shoulde content themselves with a vaine title of sayth, or with a naked profession. I do willingly allowe both these endes, that Christ teacheth that the mixture of good and euill must bee patiently borne, vntill the ende of the worlde: because the true and perfecte restitution of the Church shall not bee before that time. Then that hee admonisheth that it sufficeth not, nay, it is to no purpose for vs to be gathered into the sheepefold, except wee bee peculiar and chosen sheepe: to which purpose belongeth that saying of Paule. 2. Tim. 2. 19. The Lorde knoweth who are his: therefore let euery one that calleth on the name of the Lorde depart from iniquitie. Also he compareth the preaching of the Gospel very aptly to a nette drawne vnder the water, that we might know that the present state of the Church is a thing confused. For though our God, as he is the God of order, and not of confusion, commendeth discipline vnto vs: yet for a time hee graunteth the hypocrites a place amongst the faithfull, vntill hee at the last day doe bring his kingdome into perfecte order. Therefore as much as in vs lyeth, lette vs endeuour to correcte vices, and let filthinesse bee severely purged: yet shall not the Church bee free from wrinkles and spots, before that Christ shall separate the lambes from the goates.

51. *Vnderstand yee all these things?* That must bee remembered, which wee sawe before, that all the Parables were expounded priuately to the disciples. But now after the Lorde hath familiarly and so louingly instructed

sted them, he also admonisheth them, that he hath not onely employed his labour in teaching the, that they might onely be wise for themselves, but that they should impart vnto others that, which was committid to them. And by this meanes hee sharpeneth them and prouoketh them the more to endeavour to learne. Therefore he saith, that teachers are like to houthoulders, which are not onely carefull, for that they shall liue by themselves, but they haue also provision layd vp in store for the nourishment of others. Then they liue not carelessly for a day: but they provide for a much longer time to come. And the meaning is, that the teachers of the Church ought to bee instructed by long studie, that as neede shal require they may minister to the Church abundance of doctrine out of the worde of God, as out of a storehouse. That many of the old writers, by new and old doe vnderstand the law and the Gospell, seemeth in my iudgement to be wasted. I therefore doe take it more simply for the diuerse and manifold wayes of dispensing the mysteries, which they doe aptly & wisely apply to euery mans capacite.

Matth.

Marke.

Luke. 7.

36. And one of the Pharisees desired him that he would eate with him: and he wente into the Pharisees house, and sate downe at table.

37. And beholde, a woman in the citie, which was a sinner, when she knew that Iesus sate at table in the pharisees house, she brought a boxe of oynments.

38. And shee stoode at his feete behind him, weeping, & beganne to wash his feete with teares. and did wipe them with the haire of her head, and kissed his feete, and annoynted them with the oynment.

39. Nowe, when the Pharisee, which bade him, saw it, hee spake within himselfe, saying, If this man were a Prophet, hee woulde surely haue knowne, who, and what manner of woman this is, which toucheth him: for she is a sinner.

40. And Iesus answered, and sayde vnto him, Simon, I haue somewhat to say vnto thee, and he said master, say on.

41. There was a certaine lender, which had two debtors: the one ought fye hundred pence, and the other fiftie.

42. When they had nothing to pay, he forgane them both. Which of them therefore, tell me, will loue him most?

43. Simon answered, and sayde, I suppose that hee, to whome he forgane most. And he sayd vnto him, thou hast truly iudged.

44. Then hee turned to the woman, and sayde vnto Simon, Seest thou this woman? I entred into thine house, and thou gauest mee no water to my feete: but shee hath washed my feete with teares, and wiped them with the haire of her head.

45. Thou gauest mee no kisse, but shee since the time I came in, hath not ceased to kisse my feete.

46. Myne head with oyle thou didest not annoint: but shee hath annointed my feete with oyntment.

47. Wherefore I say vnto thee, many sinnes are forgiven her: for shee loued much. To whom a litle is forgiven the same doth loue a litle.

48. And he sayd vnto her, Thy sinnes are forgiven thee.

49. And they that sate at table with him, began to say within theselues, who is this that euen forgiveth sinnes?

50. And he sayd to the woman, thy faith hath saved thee, goe thy way.

36. And one of the pharises desired him. This history declareth how overthwart all they are, which know not the office of Christ, in conceiuing, yea, & in seeking and taking offences. A Pharisee inuited Christ: whereby we gather that he was one, neither of the enuious and violent enemyes of his doctrine, neither of the proud contemners. but though he was meeke, he was presently offended, when he sawe a woman gentlye admitted by Christ, who in his opinion should haue beene driuen from his company and speach: and therefore he denieth him to be a Prophet, because he knewe not the Mediatour, whose peculiar office it shoulde bee, to reduce miserable sinners into fauoure with God. This truly was somewhat to vouchsafe Christ the honour of a prophet. but he ought also to haue enquired to what end he should be sent, what he shuld bring and to be short, what was enioned him of the father, because he neglected the grace of reconciliation, whiche is specially to bee taken holde of in Christe hee thought him not to bee a Prophet. And certainly this womanne oughte to haue beene reiected, if shee had not by the grace of Christe her sinnes beinge abolyshed, obtained a new righteousnesse. Simone is deceiued onely in this, because not consideringe that Christe came to saue that was lost, he coniectureth rathlye that hee could not discern the worthy from the vnworthy. Further, least any such disdainefullnes should ouerwhelme vs, let vs know first that Christ was giuen as a delyuerer of miserable and lost men, to restore them from death to life. Then let euery man examine himselfe and his life: so it shall come to passe that wee shall not wonder that others are receiued with vs: because no man shall be so bolde as to preferre himselfe aboue others. For hypocrisie onely puffeth men vp into securitie, so that they despise all others.

37. A woman in the cittie, which was a sinner. It is so worde for worde, as I haue translated it: Erasmus thought best to vse the preterpluperfect tense of the verbe, least any should thinke her then as yet to haue beene a sinner. But he leaueth the verye meaninge of the wordes. Luke woulde note what the behauiour of the womanne was, and what all men thought of her. For though her sodeine chaunge hadde made her another womanne before GOD, then shee was before, yet the infamy of her former life was not as yet extinguished amongst men.

Therefore

Therefore by common iudgemente thee was a sinner, that is of a wicked and shamefull life. Whereuppon Simon doothe euill inferre that Christe had not the spirite of discretione, whoe knewe not that infamy so commonly knowne.

40. *Iesus answered.* Christe declareth by this aunswere how muche Simon was deceaued. For he reuealing and setting forth his tilente and secreete thoughte, proueth that hee hath some greater excellencie then the prophets. For, he answereth not his wordes, but he refuteth that, which he kept secreete within. And that not for Simons sake onely, but that wee all maye thereby learne that it is not to be feared, that hee shoulde reiecte any sinners from him who is readye no lesse lyberallye, as with outstretched armes to receiue all, then gentlye and louinglye to call them to him.

41. *Two debtors.* The summe of this parable is, that Simon erred in condemning the woman, whiche the heauenly Iudge hath cleared. And hee proueth that thee is righteous, not because she hath sacrificed God: but because sinnes are forgiuen her: for otherewise the similitude should not agree, where Christ saierh, the debtes were freely forgiuen the debtors because they were not able to pay. Therefore it is maruaile that so manye interpreters were so grossly deceaued, as though this woman should obtaine forgiuenesse by teares, annoynting and kissing of his seete. For the argument, whiche Christe vseth is not taken of the cause, but of the effecte: for this in order is first to receiue the benefit, then to giue thanks: and free forgiuenesse is here noted to be the cause of this mutuall loue. In summe, the argument, wherby Christ proueth that this woman is reconciled to God, is gathered of the frutes or the latter effectes

44. *Hee turned to the Woman.* The Lorde seemeth so to compare Simon with the woman that he maketh him bound onelye for small offences. But the manner of his graunting is, as if he should haue sayde, Simon imagine that thy guiltinesse were but small, from the which the Lorde hath deliuered thee: and that this woman was ouerwhelmed with many and most grieuous sinnes: yet thou seest that shee is for, iuen, and shee now doth testifie the same in deed. For what meane these teares thus abundantly shedd? what the continual washing of my seete: what the precious oyntment, but that shee confeseth her selfe to haue bene ouerwhelmed with a wonderfull weighte of damnation? And now she embraceth the mercie of God so muche more earnestly, by how much shee acknowledgeth her selfe to haue greater neede of the same. Therefore by Christs words it can not be gathered, whether Simons debt was smal, and whether he was deliuered from the guiltines of the same. It is rather to be beleueed, that he was a blinde hypocrite, and then was yet drowned in the filthines of his sinnes. But Christ rested vpon this one thing, though shee had bene a wicked woman, yet the're are manifest signes of her righteousnesse, that to testifie her thankfullnes, shee omitted no kind of dutie, and shee declared by al meanes shee could how much shee was bound to God: yet Christ admonisheth Simon that there is no cause why hee shoulde flatter himselfe, as though he were free from al fault: for he also had need of mercie. Then if he himselfe do not please God without forgiuenes, he ought by these signs of repentance and thankfulness to consider, whatsoeuer this womā had sinned, was forgiue her. The words are to be noted

noted wherein this woman is preferred aboue Simon: namely, that she washed Christes feete with her teares, and wiped them with her hayres, when hee had not commanded to giue him so much as common water: that shee ceased not to kisse his feete, when he had not vouchsafed to receiue Christ with a kisse of salutation for a guest: that shee had powred precious ointment vpon his feete, and hee had not annoynted his head with oyle. Also this was the cause why the Lord, who was a singular example of a sparing and moderate life, suffered the cost of this ointment to be bestowed vpon him: because the miserable sinner should be by this meane testified that shee oughte all to him. For hee desired not delights, nor was allured with pleasant saour, nor allowed glorious decking, but looked only for an earnest testimonie of repentance: which is also set forth by Luke, as an example to vs: for the teares are witness of her sorrow, which is the beginning of repentance. Shee came behind Christ, and there threwe her selfe downe at his feete, in which appeared her shamefastnes and humility: shee brought her oynement, and offered her selfe and all shee had in sacrifice to Christ. All these things are for vs to follow: but the shedding of the oynement was a particular action, which should be yll drawne into a generall rule.

47. *Her sinnes are forgiven her.* Some thinking the verbe to haue bene of the moode of exhorting, doe gather this sense, sith this woman sheweth by these notable deeds, that shee wholly burneth with the loue of Christ, it is not meete that the Church should be more sharpe or hard against her, but that she should rather be gently entreated, though shee had grieuously offended. But the manner of placing of the Greeke word being well considered, that subtil exposition may bee reiected, which the text refuseth. For a litle after Christ speaking to the woman rehearseth the same, where the maner of exhorting could not agree. And the contrary clause followeth this sentence, lesse is forgiven to him that loueth lesse. Though the verbe of the present tense may bee resolued into the preter tense. For sith shee endeouored to performe carefully all the duties of pietie, Christ hereof inferreth, that though shee was couered with many sins yet the mercy of God was greater then that shee should bee accounted a sinner any more. But this loue is not sayd to be the cause of forgivenesse, but a signe following after, as I sayd before. For this is the meaning of the words. They which see so great desire of pietie in a woman are peruerse Iudges, except they iudge thereby that God hath alreadye bene mercifull vnto her, so that free forgiveness hath in order gone before. For christ doth not dispute by what price me should obtaine the grace of God, but hee proueth that God hath now forgiven this miserable sinner, and that mortall man should not be so hard against her.

48. *Thy sinnes are forgiven thee.* It may bee demanded to what ende Christ promiseth her againe that forgiveness, which shee had obtayned, and whereof shee was assured. Some say that this was spoken not so much for her sake, as for others. But in my iudgement he had especiall regarde of her: as shall more evidently appeare by those things, which follow.

It is no maruaile that shee shoulde againe bee absolved by Christes woordes, which hadde tasted his grace before: and who was perswaded that hee was the onely sanctuary of her saluation. So it is necessary that

faith should alwayes goe before, when we aske of the Lord, that he would forgive our sinnes. Neyther do we make this prayer in vaine, as a thing needlesse but that the heavenly Iudge would more and more seale his mercy in our harts and by this meanes quiet our consciences. Therefore though this woman had conceaued faith by faith which shee had obtained, yet this promise was not superfluous: for it much auayled to the confirmation of that faith.

49. *They which sate at the table with him began to say.* Here we perceiue againe that men not knowing the office of Christ, doe thereof gather to themselves new offences. And this is the roote of euill, that no man searcheth his owne miseries, which with out doubt would prouoke all men to seeke remedy. But it is no maruaile, if the hypocrites, which sleepe in their owne finnes should murmur at this, as at a strange and wonderfull matter, that Christ should forgive sinnes.

50. *Thy faith hath saved thee.* Christ, to appease the murmurers, and withall to comfort the woman, prayseth her faith. as if he should haue sayd, how so euer these doe grudge, establish thou thy selfe constantly in that faith, which hath brought thee assured saluation. Yet Christ referueth vnto himselfe that right giuen him of the father: for as the power of healing was in him, the faith is rightly directed to him. And it declareth that the woman was not lead by rashnes, or by ignorance to come vnto him, but by the direction of the spirit shee helde the right way of faith. Whereof it followeth, that wee cannot beleue in any other, then in the sonne of God: but that we should make him the Iudge of life and death. For, if we ought to beleue in Christ, because the heavenly father hath giuen him power to forgive sinnes, as soone as faith is applied to any other this his honour is of necessitie taken from him. By this saying also is their error confuted, which thinke that sinnes are redeemed by charitie: for Christ setteth here downe a farre other meanes, in that we embrace the mercy offered by faith. In the last clause is noted the incomparable fruite of faith, which the scripture so oft commendeth, to witte, that it bringeth peace and ioy to the consciences, least through disquietnesse and trouble they should bee tossed hether and thither.

Mathew

Marke

Luke. 10.

38. Now it came to passe as they went, that he entred into a certaine towne, and a certaine woman named Martha, receiued him into her house.

39. And shee had a sister called Mary, which also sate at Iesus feete, and heard his preaching.

40. But Martha was cumbred about much seruing, and came to him, and sayde, master doest thou not care that my sister hath left me to serue alone? bid her therefore that shee helpe me.

41. And Iesus answered, and sayd vnto her, Martha, thou carest, & art troubled about many things

42. But

42. But one thing is needefull, Mary hath chosen the better part, which shall not bee taken away from her.

38. *That he entred.* This history declareth that whether soeuer Christ went, hee was not giuen priuately to himselfe, nor to seeke his owne commodities or delights: but this was his onely desire, to profite others, and that hee might performe the office enioyned him of his father. For Luke declareth, that when he was friendly entertained of Martha, as soone as he was entred into the house, hee applied himselfe to teaching and to exhorting. But because that this place is vildely wristed to the praise of the life contemplatiue, as they call it, we must seeke out the naturall meaning, where by it shall appeare that the purpose of Christ was nothing lesse then to appoynt his disciples to liue in idlenesse and in colde speculations.

It is an olde error, that they which withdraw themselves from businesse, and apply themselves wholly to contemplations, do liue an Angelles life. And the Sorbonistes doe seeme to haue drawne their trifling about this matter out of Aristotle, who placeth his chiefest good thing, and the last end of mans life in contemplation, which, according to his iudgement, is the enioying of vertue. And when ambition hadde caried some to withdraw themselves frō the common trade of life, or that froward men had giuen themselves to solytarines & idlenesse, this pride also followed, that by doing nothing they imagined themselves to be like to Angels: for the traueilling life was so much disdained of the, as if it should withdraw vs from heauen. But wee know that men were created to this end, that they should labour, and no sacrifices do please God better, then that every man should labour in his calling, and to apply himselfe to liue profitably for the common wealth. But how ignorantly they haue abused the words of Christ to proue their device, shall easily appeare out of the plaine sence.

Luke saith that Mary was at Iesus feete: doth he meane that she did nothing else all her life time? But the Lord rather commandeth that the times should so be deuided, that he which studieth to profit in God his schoole should not be an idle & a negligent hearer: but that he should put in practice that which he learned: for there is a time of hearing, & a time of labouring. Therefore the Monkes do very fondly wrest this place, as though Christ should compare the contemplatiue life with the labouring life: whē as Christ doth simply shew to what end and how he would be receiued. For though the hospitality of Martha is worthy of cōmendation, as it is praised: yet Christ noteth two faults in the same. The first is, that Martha exceeded measure in busying her selfe. For Christ had rather to be entertained sparingly, & with small charge, thē that the holy matron shuld take so much paine. The second fault was that Martha withdrawing her selfe, & being occupied in superfluous labors, made the cōming of Christ vnprofitable for her. For Lu. noteth her excessse, in y^e he mentioneth her much seruing, whē Christ was content with a little. For this was as much as if a man receiuing a Prophet, shuld haue no regard to hear him, but shuld rather bury all y^e doctrine with great & superfluous preparatiō. But the lawfull receiuing of the prophets is, when the

ceiued, which God appoynteth and offereth to vs by them. Now we see that the diligence of Martha worthy of commendation, yet was not without fault. Also it had this fault more, that Martha pleasing her selfe in these troublesome labours, despised the godly desire that her sister had to learne. By which example wee are warned to take heede alwayes, least any in well doing preferre themselves aboute others.

42. *One is needefull.* Some expound it too coldly, that one kinde of meat is sufficient. Others dispute more subtilly, but besides the purpose of an vnitie. But Christ bent himselfe an other way, namely, that whatsoeuer the faithfull should take in hand to doe, and whereto foeuer they apply themselves, yet there is one ende, to the which it is meete that al things should be referred. The sum therefore is that wee wander about in vaine, if wee direct not all our actions to a certaine end. Therefore the hospitalitie of Martha was faultie, because that the principall matter was neglected, and she was wholly caried away in taking care about her busines. Yet the meaning of Christe is not that all other things are nothing this onely excepted, but order must be wisely holden, least the accessary, as they call it be more esteemed then the principall. *Mary hath chosen the good parte.* Here is no comparison, as foolish and absurd interpreters do dreame: but Christ onely sayeth, that Mary is occupied in a holy & profitable exercise, from which she ought not to be drawne: as if he should haue sayd, thou mightest well here haue reprooued thy sister, if she following idlenesse, or being occupied in vaine cares, or desiring any other thing not meete for her calling, should haue laide the whole burden of prouiding for the house vpon thee. But now when shee applyeth her selfe well, and profitably to hearing, it were not well to draw her from it: for such oportunitie is not had alwayes. Though others doe take the latter part other wise, as if Christ had sayd that Mary had therefore chosen the better part, because the fruite of the heavenly doctrine neuer filleth away, the which iudgement, though I do not reiect, yet I haue followed that, which I thinke doeth most aptly agree to the meaning of Christe.

Matth.

Marke.

Luke. 12.

13. And one of the company sayd vnto him, maister, bid my brother deuide the inheritance with me.

14. And he said vnto him, man, who made mee a iudge, or a deuider ouer you?

15. Wherefore he said vnto them, take heede, and beware of couetousnes: for though a man haue abundance, yet his life standeth not in his riches.

16. And he put forth a parable vnto the, saying, The ground of a certaine rich man brought forth fruites pleneously.

17. Therefore hee thought with himselfe, sayinge, what shall I doe, because I haue no rounge, where I may lay vp my fruites?

18. And hee sayde, this will I doe, I will pull downe my barnes, and builde greater, and therein will I gather all my fruites and my goodes.

19. And

19. And I will say to my soule, soule, thou hast much goods laid vp for many yeeres: line at ease, eate, drinke, and take thy pastime.
20. But God sayd vnto him, O foole, this night will they fetch thy soule from thee: then whose shall those things be, which thou hast provided?
21. So is hee, that gathereth riches to himselfe, and is not rich in God.

13. Did my brother deuide. The Lord being required to giue iudgment for the deuision of inheritance, refused to doe it. Sith this made for the nourishment of brotherly concord, and the office of Christe was not onely to reconcile men to God, but to bring them to mutuall consent: it is demanded what the cause should be, why he would not end the strife betweene two brethren. And it appeareth that there were two causes especially why hee abstained from the office of a Iudge. First, sith the Iewes imagined the kingdome of the Messiah to be earthly, his will was to take heede, least hee shoulde by any example nourish that errour. for if they had seene him deuide the inheritances, the rumour of that deede should presently haue beene spread abroad. So many hoped for a carnall redemption, and gaped too greedily after the same: the wicked gloried that he should bring new matters to passe, & that hee should overthrow the state of the Romane empyre. Wherefore there could not a better answer haue beene giuen then this, whereby all men might vnderstand that the kingdome of Christ was spirituell. Therefore let vs learne to gouerne our selues soberly, nor to attempt any thing, which may be drawne into the worst parte. Secondly, it was also the Lordes will to make a difference betweene the politique Empyre of this world, and the gouernment of his Church: for he was created Doctor by the father, who shoulde by the sword of the worde cut downe thoughts and affections, and should pearce into the soules of men: but he was not a magistrate to deuide inheritances. So the theft of the Pope & his priestes is here condemned, which pretending themselues to be Pastors of the Church yet are so bolde as to invade the earthly and prophane iurisdiction, which nothing pertaineth to their office. For there is somewhat, which is of it selfe layfull, which yet belongeth not to euery man. Also in my iudgement there is a third particular reasse: that is, because Christ saw this man leauing the doctrine and providing for his own household commodities. And this disease is too common, so that many professing the gospel, doubt not to abuse the pretence of the same for the increasing of their wealth, and to pretend the authoritie of Christ for their owne gaines.

This may be readily gathered by the circumstance of the exhortation: for except that man had abused the title of the gospel to his own gaine, there had not bin occasion giuen to Christ to condemne his couetousnes. Therefore the text doth sufficiently declare that this man was but a fained disciple, whose minde was drowned in fields or money bagges. Furthermore, the Anabaptistes do too foolishly inserte of this answer, that it is not lawfull for a Christian man to deuide inheritances, to thrust himselfe in, to deale with worldly affayres, or to execute any ciuill office. For Christe argueth not of the matter it selfe, but

but of his owne calling: because he was ordayned of his father to an other end, he sayth, that he is no iudge, because he hath no such commandement. Therefore let this rule be of force amongst vs, that euery man keepe himselfe within the bands of the calling, wherein the Lord hath set him.

15. *Take heede and beware.* First, he calleth his disciples backe from couetousnes, then, that he might purge the mindes thoroughly from this disease, he affirmeth that our life consisteth, not in aboumdance: By which wordes is noted the fountaine and inward beginning, whence this mad desire of hauing ariseth. For the people doe commonly iudge, that the more a man possesseth, the happier his life is, and they imagine riches to bee the cause of a blessed life. Hence commeth that intemperate desire of hauing, which as a burning furnace sendeth out his heate, and yet ceaseth not to burne within. If that wee were perswaded that riches and all aboumdance of goods, be helpees of this present life, which the Lord giueth vnto vs with his owne hand, and blesseth the vse thereof, this one thought would easily appease all wicked desires: and that do the faithfull finde true by their owne experience. For whereof commeth it to passe, that with stuyed mindes they should depend of God alone: but because they binde not their life, nor make it subiect to aboumdance of riches, but they rest in the prouidence of God, who onely both sustayneth vs by his power, & giueth vs as much as is meete?

16. *He put forth a similitude.* This similitude proposeth vnto vs, as in a glasse a liuely shew of that sentence, that men liue not by the abundance of their riches. For sith the richest doe also lose their life in a moment, what helpeth it to gather vp great heape of riches? All men grant this to be true, so that Christ speaketh nothing, but that which is vsuall and common, & which is in all mens tongues: but in the meane season how doth euery man apply and giue his mind. Doe not all men rather so frame their liues, and so mixe their counsels & their reasons, that they may depart furthest of from God, placing their life in the present aboumdance of their riches? Therefore all menne haue neede to waken themselves, least they imagining themselves to bee blessed by reason of their riches, should entangle themselves in the snares of couetousnesse. Also in this parable is set forth vnto vs the vncertaine shortnes of this life. Further, how riches doe profit nothing for the lengthening of this life. There is a third thing to bee added, which is not exprest, but may easily bee gathered out of the former, that this is a notable helpe to the faithfull, that seeking their dayly bread from the Lord whether they bee rich or poore, their onely rest is in his prouidence.

17. *What shall I doe?* The wicked are therefore doubtfull in their counsels, because they know not the lawfull vse of their riches: then beecause they beeing drunken in their peruerse hope, doe forget themselves. So this rich man setting the hope of his life in his great aboumdance, shaketh the remembrance of death farre away. And yet is distrust annexed to this pride: for couetousnes, which neuer is filled, doeth yet neuertheless vex these rich men, as this rich man inlargeth his barnes, as though his belly being stuffed with his former barnes, had not yett inough. Yet Christ doth not expressly condemne this, that he doth the parte of a diligent and carefull houtholder in laying vpp prouision:

but

but because as a bottomlesse deepe hee woulde swallowe vp and deuour many barnes in his greedy couetousnesse wherof it followeth that hee knewe not the true vse of plentifull prouision. Now, when hee exhorteth himselfe to eating and to drinking, he remembreth himselfe no longer to be a manne, but becometh proud in his abundance. And wee doe daily see euident examples of this insolencie in prophane menne, which sette the heape of their riches, as brazen fortresses against death. When he sayth, my soule, eat and be merry in this speach there is great force after the phrased of the Hebrewes: for he so speaketh vnto himselfe, that yet hee would declare that he hath abundance to fill the desire of his minde and all his senses.

20. *O foole, this night will they fetch away thy soule from thee.* There is an allusion in this worde *soule*. The rich man spake first to his soule, as the seat of all his affections: but now it is spoken of the life it selfe, or of the vitall spirite. The verbe *they will fetch*, though it bee the plurall number, yet, because it is indefinite, it signifieth nothing else, then that the life is in the power of another, which the rich man accounted to be in his owne hande: which I doe therefore giue warning of, because that some do without cause imagine this to be spoken of the Angelles. And in this is the rich man reprooued of folly, that he knew not that his life depended of another.

21. *So is he that gathereth riches to himselfe.* Sith it appeareth that there is here a comparison, the exposition of one parte of the sentence must be gathered out of the other. Let vs therefore define what the meaning of this is, to bee rich in God, or toward God, or in respect of God. They which are but meanelly exercised in the Scripture doe know that the Greekes do vse oft one of these prepositions for an another. But it is no matter, which of the two wayes sooner be taken, for this is the summe, they are rich toward God, which trust not in earthly things, but depend of his only providence. Neyther is it of any waight, whether they haue abundance, or bee in want: so that both sorts doe sincerely aske their daily bread from the Lord. For that which is opposed against it, to gather riches to himselfe, signifieth as much, as to neglecte the blessing of God, and carefully to heape vp great abundance, as if their hope were shutte vpe in their barnes. Of this may the end of the parable be gathered, that vaine are their counsellcs, and ridiculous are their labours, which trusting to the abundance of their riches, doe not repose themselues in God alone, nor are not content with his measure ready to beare both estates, and at length they shall beare the iudgement of their owne vanitie.

Matth.

Marke.

Luke. 13.

1. *There were certaine menne present at the same season, that shewed him of the Galileans, whose blond Pilate had mingled with their owne sacrifices.*

2. *And Iesus answered and sayde vnto them, suppose yee, that these Galileans were greater sinners then all the other Galileans, because they haue suffered such things?*

3. I tell you nay: but except yee amend your liues, yee shall all likewise perishe.
 4. Or thinke you that those eightene, vppon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, were sinners aboue all men that dwelt in Hierusalem?
 5. I tell you nay: but except you amend your liues, yee all shall likewise perishe.
 6. He spake also this parable, A certaine manne had a figtree planted in his vineyard, and hee came and sought fruite thereon, and found none.
 7. Then sayde he to the dresser of his vineyard, behold, this three yeares I haue come and sought fruis of this figtree, and finde none, cutte it downe: why keepeth it also the ground barren?
 8. And he answered, & said vnto him, Lord, let it alone this yeare also, till I digge round about it, & doing it,
 9. And if it beare fruite, well: if not, then after shalt thou cutte it downe.

2. Suppose yee that these. This place is very profitable euen for this cause, for that this disease is engrafted almost in vs all, that being too sharpe & seuerer iudges against others wee flatter our selues in our own sinnes. So it falleth out, that we do not onely exaggerate the sinnes of our brethren more sharply then is meete, but also if any aduersitie come vnto them, wee condemne them as wicked men and reprobates. In the meane while, whosoever is not touched with the hand of God, sleepeth carelesly in his owne sinnes, as if hee had God fauourable and mercifull: wherein there is a double fault. For as oft as God chastiseth any man in our sight he admonissheth vs of his iudgements, that euery one should learne to examine himselfe, and to consider what they haue deserued. And that he spareth vs for a time, it is of his benignity and mercy, wherby he calleth vs to repentance, & it ought to be far from vs from taking occasion thereby of sluggishness. That Christ therfore might correct that wicked iudgement, wherein we become enemies to them that are in miseries & in afflictions, and that hee might withall shake away those pleasures, wherin euery man flattereth himselfe: first, he teacheth that they are not the worst, which are hardest handled of all others: because God so executeth his iudgements in that order and maner as hee shall thinke good, so that some are presently punished, others doe rest long in idleness & pleasures. Then he saith, that as many calamities as befall in the world, are so many testimonies of the wrath of God. Whereby we gather what destruction there remaineth for vs, except we amend. The there ariseth occasion of exhortation of this, that some brought woorde that Pilate mingled mans bloud with sacrifices: to witte, that sacrifices by such an haynous deed might come into detestation. And because it is likely that this reproach was done to the Samaritanes, which were fallen from the pure worship of the lawe, it was an easie and a ready matter for the Iewes by condemning the Samaritans to iustifie themselves, but the Lord turneth them an other way.

And because the wickednesse of the whole nation was odious & infamous vnto them, hee demaundeth of them whether they thinke that those wretches which were slaine by Pilate, were worse then all others: as if he shoulde haue sayde, it is not knowne vnto you, that that land is full of wicked menne, and that there remaineth many yet aliue, which were worthy of the same punishment. A blinde therefore and a wicked iudge is hee, which measureth the sinnes of menne by the present punishments. For the worst manne is not first punished: but out of many the Lorde chuseth a fewe to bee punished, in whose person hee teacheth the rest that hee is an auenger, that all might feare him. But after hee hadde spoken of the Samaritanes, hee came neare to the Iewes themselues: For in those dayes when eightene menn were slaine with fall of a tower of Hierusalem, hee affirmeth that they were not the wickedest, but in the destruction of them, hee sayeth that there was an example of terour sette forth vnto all menne: for if God hath shewed a token of his iudgement vpon them, others shall nothing the rather escape his hand, though they bee borne with for a time. And Christ forbiddeth not, but that the faithfull should be diligent in considering the iudgements of God: but he appointeth this order to be holden, that they should begin at their own sinnes. For hereof shall great profit come, so that they that with voluntary repentance preuent the iudgement of God. To the which purpose that exhortation of Paule doeth also pertaine, Ephes. 5.6. Let no man deceiue you with vaine wordes, for from these things cometh the wrath of God vpon the children of disobedience.

6. *Hee speak also this Parable.* The summe tendeth to this purpose, that many which are worthy of destruction, are tolerated for a time: yet they shall gaine nothing by the delay, if they goe forward in their obstinacy. For hence cometh a wicked flattery, wherein the hypocrites doe harden themselues, & become more obstinate, because they consider not their owne miseries, except they bee forced: and therefore so long as the Lorde winketh, and suspendeth his corrections, they imagine with themselues that they are well agreed with him. So they nourish vpp themselves in securitie, as if they had made a covenent with death, and with the graue, as Isaias sayeth, 28. 15. Therefore doeth Paule inuey against them so vehemently to the Romanes, 2. 5. because they heape vppe for themselues, the wrath of God against the latter day. And wee knowe that the trees are sometimes preserved, not because they are alwayes profitable and fruitfull to their owners: but because the carefull and wise husbandmen attempteth and tryeth euey way before he will stocke vppe his fiede or his vineyard. But we are hereby taught, that the Lorde hath great reason of his forbearing, when he doeth not presently reuenge himselfe vpon the wicked, but deferreth their punishments. Whereby mans rashnes is put to silence: least any shoulde be so bolde as to murmur against the cheife iudge of all men, if he doe not alwayes execute his iudgements in like sorte. But the comparison is here made betweene the Lord and the steward, not because the ministers of God do exceede him in mercy and meekenesse, but because the Lorde doth not only prolong the life of sinners, but he also husbandeth them diuers waies, that he might gather better fruite.

Matthewe.

Marke.

Luke 13.

10. And hee taught in one of the Synagogues on the Sabbath day.

11. And behold, there was a woman which had a spirit of infirmity 18. yeares, and was bowed together, & could not lift vp her selfe in any wise.

12. When Iesus saw her, he called her to him, and saide to her, woman, thou art loosed from thy disease.

13. And hee layd his handes on her, and immediatly she was made straight againe, and glorified God.

14. And the ruler of the Synagogue answered with indignation, because that Iesus healed on the Sabbath day, and sayd vnto the people: There are sixe dayes in which men ought to worke: in them therefore come and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day.

15. The answered him the Lord, and said: Hypocrite, doth not each one of you on the Sabbath day, lose his oxe or his asse from the stall, & leade him away to the waters?

16. And ought not this daughter of Abraham, who Sathan had bound, loe 18. yeares, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?

17. And when hee had sayd these things, all his aduersaries were ashamed: but all the people ioyced at all the excellent things that were done by him.

I haue determined to gather together into this one place, those things which are red in diuers places, set down by Luke alone, without expresse noting of the time, as we haue sayd elsewhere, that the Euangelistes were nothing curious in this behalfe. Our returne shall after be the better to the common Harmony. Here is report made of a myracle in healing of a woman, & the Iewes maliciously conceiued an offence, because the Lord healed her on the Sabbath day. Luke sayth that the woman was holdē with a spirit of infirmity, so that the bodie was shrunke vp with the shrinking of the synewes. But because he doth not otherwise describe what kind of disease it was, it seemeth not to be any cōmon disease, nor any such as the phisitions knew therefore he calleth it a spirit of infirmity. For we know that the deuill applyeth himselfe to plague men with strange & vnwonted diseases. Wherin the diuine power of Christ shewed it selfe more euidently in triumphing ouer sathan: not that sathā ruleth ouer men at his owne pleasure, but as he hath power giuē him of the Lord to hurt. But as the Lord being the only authour of all good things, yet he doth chiefly shew his glory in especiall & extraordinary benefits: so also he would haue the power & tyrannie of sathan especially knowne in extraordinary scourges, though hee also vse his hand in light chastisements, with which he doth daily chastise vs.

12. Woman thou art loosed. Christe in this myracle as in others, giueth a testimony both of his power and of his grace. For hee sayeth that he came for that cause that hee might helpe them in misery. The power is expressed in these words: woman thou art loosed: for of his authoritie he saith that he had the deliue-

deliuerance in his hand. Yet he addeth an outward signe, of the vse, whereof wee haue entreated other where. That the people glorifieth God, it testifieth to vs that this heavenly benefit was euident. For it was no obscure worke which might by disputation be applyed eyther way, but it was such as gaue great and certaine occasion of prying God. Whereby the wickednesse of the maister of the synagoge is reuealed.

14. *There are fixe daies.* This controller dareth not condemne Christ openly, but he turneth the payson of his frowardnes an other way, condemning Christ ouerthwartly in the person of the common people. And he was growen in malice to a madnes without reason he warneth the that there are 6. daies appointed for labour: but how wickedly and foolishly defineth he that labor which is not permitted but for those 6. daies? Why doth he not also forbid them entering into the synagoge, least they should breake the Sabbath? Why doeth hee not commaund them to abstaine frō the exercises of godlines? If that men are only restrained frō their own works on the sabboth day, how wicked is it then to tie or restraine the spirit of God? He commadeth the to come to be healed on other daies: as though the power of God should lie & sleepe on the sabboth, and shuld not rather that day more exercise the same for the saluatiō of his people. For to what purpose are the holy assembles, but that the faithfull should seeke & craue the ayd and helpe of God? Therefore this wicked hypocrite speaketh, as if the lawfull obseruation of the sabboth, should hinder the course of Gods benefites should exclude men frō calling vpon him, & should deprive them of his grace.

15. *Each one of you on the sabbath day.* When it was an easie matter to reuell so grosse malice with diuers arguments, Christ was content with this one: if it be lawfull to shew kindnes on the sabbath day to beastes, they faine a very preposterous worship, if on that day the children of God should not be holpē. But there is a double cōparison in the wordes of Christ: of the beast with the daughter of Abraham, and of the halter wherewith the asse or ox is tied to the manger, with the bandes of sathan wherin he holdeth men bound to their destruction. You (sayth he) which are so scrupulous obseruers of the sabboth, dare lose your oxen and asses, that they may be led to the water, why shall it not then be lawfull for me to performe the like dutie to the elect people of God, especially where greater necessitie requireth it? namely, when any man is to be deliuered from the snares of Sathan? And though this wicked reprehender held his peace for shame, yet we see that Christ wrought not any miracle so notable which the wicked did not cauille at. Neither is it any maruaile if Sathan applyed all his studie and endeuour to this purpose, that he might peruert the glory of Christ, who ceaseth not dayly to scatter his cloudes, that he might by them obscure the holy workes of the faithfull. It is to be noted that Christ calleth her the daughter of Abraham, whose body had beene 18. yeeres intrahled to sathan: and hee called her so, not onely in respect of the stocke, as all the Iewes generally were proud of this title, but because she was one of the true and naturall members of the church. Wherein we do also behold that which Paule teacheth, 1. Cor. 5. 5 that some are deliuered to sathan for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirite might be sauēd in the day of the Lorde. And the continuance of that time teacheth vs not to despaire though the Lord doth not perfectly heale our miseries.

Matthew.

Marke

Luke 13.

31. *The same day there came certaine Pharisees, and sayd vnto him: Departs and goe hence: for Herod seeketh to kill thee.*

32. *Then sayde he vnto them: Goe yee and tell that Foxe: Behold I cast out devils, & I will heale still to day and to morow, and the third day I shall be perfited.*

33. *Neuerthelesse, I must walke to day, and to morowe, and the day followinge: for it cannot be, that a Prophet should perish out of Ierusalem.*

A' so it cannot be certainly coniectured when this befell, but that it is euident that Christ was then in Galile, as in all the course of his trauaile, hee was more then other where. For they which would seeme to bee his freindes, perswade him to be out of Herodes iurisdiction, if that he would be safe. Now, it is vnknowne howe they were affected which gaue this counsell: but I rather coniecture, when they saw the most part of the people there giuen to Christ, so that the doctrine of the Gospell was euery where receiued, they assayed to driue him to some other place. It is to be noted who these warners were. Luke sayth that they were some of the Pharisies, but we know that secte was not so mercifull to Christ, that it should be probable that they were carefull of his life. What then? certainly their purpose was by casting a feare before him, to driue him away into some corners: for so they hoped that it should come to passe, that in short time his authoritie shoulde decay, and his whole doctrine shoulde vanish away. But yet wee must consider the purpose of Sathan, the cheife master and framer of this deuise: for as by fearing the sonne of G O D, he sought then to hinder the course of the Gospell, so he now inuenteth and frameth new terrours, wherewith he might discourage the ministers of Christ, and enforce them to leaue their course.

32. *Tell that Foxe: behold I cast out devils.* It is certaine that hee speaketh of Herod Antipas. And though he had the maners of a Foxe, and a disposition no lesse seruite then crafty, yet I doe not thinke that hee comprehendeth the subtiltie of his whole life vnder this name Foxe: but his secrete deceites where hee attempted to vndermine the doctrine of the Gospell, when with open warre hee durst not set vpon it. For Christ declareth, though hee was crafty, that yet hee shoulde preuayle nothing by his deuices. I sayth he, what guiles soeuer hee deuise, will to day and to morowe, doe the office layde vpon me of God: and when I come to the ende of the race, then shall I bee offered vppe in sacrifice. Yet, that the meaning of the wordes may bee more plainly set downe vnto vs, in the first parte of the sentence Christe graunteth, that the third day after, that is, shortly after, he should die: and thus hee declareth that he can by no feare of death be driuen frō doing his duty, to the which with a seled purpose of the minde hee goeth without feare. Then hee addeth that it is a vaine shewe of feare which is objected by those false fained warners, because there is no danger of death other where, then at Ierusalem. But in the second part hee reproveth the Pharisies sharply, doe you, who I see shall be my butchers.

butchers, warne me to take heede of Herode ? Though the vpbraidinge goeth further : for he not only sayeth, that he is ready to die at Ierusalem, but it is also a denne of the cubs, where almost all the Prophets were slaine. It is true that many were slaine other where, and especially at that time, when the cruell rage of Iesabell was hotted against them : but because that continually the prophets were not in any other place more cruelly delt with : Christ layeth worthily this reproofe vpon the wicked inhabitants of the holy Citie. And for the most part it befell the Prophets to bee slayne there : for sith the wickednesse came from thence, wherewith Iudea was filled, that also was the fildes wherein God exercised his prophets. For we know that the more the doctrine of the Gospell shineth, and the nearer it commeth to the wicked, the madder they become. Yet this is a horrible example, that the place which was chosen to be the sanctuary of the worship of God, and to bee the house of the law, & of the heavenly wisdom, should be defiled not with one or two murders, but with the ordinary slaughter of the Prophets. And hereby it appeareth how obstinate the vnthankfulness of the world was in refusing sound doctrine. Though the exclamation which followeth presently after in Luke, seeme, h so to bee ioyned to this, as if Christe hereof taking occasion, did then enuy against Ierusalem : yet I rather thinke, when Luke hadde sayd before that Ierusalem was embrewed with the Prophets blood, yea, and that it was by continual course of many ages the cruel and sacrilegious slaughterhouse, occupied in murdering the Prophets, presently according to his manner hee addeth a sentence which agreed with that speech. For wee see in diuers places before, that it was no vnwonted thing in him, to gather into one place, sayings of Christ vttered at sundry times.

Matth.

Marke.

Luke 11.

37. And as he spake, a certaine Pharisee besought him to dine with him: & he went in and sate downe at the table.
38. And when the Pharisee saw it, he marvelled that he had not first washed before dinner.
39. And the Lord sayd vnto him, in deede ye Pharisees make cleane the out side of the cuppe, & of the platter: but the inward part is full of rauening and wickednesse.
40. Yee fooles, did not he which made that which is without, make that which is within also ?
41. Therefore giue almes of those things which are within, and behold al things shall be cleane vnto you.

This heere sette downe, agreeth in parte, but not wholly with that doctrine in the fiftene Chapter of Mattheue, that Christe of purpose neglected those outward rites inuented by menne, (in obseruing whereof, the Iewes were to too carefull) that hee might correcte the superstition of the people, and especially of the Scribes. GOD hadde commaunded some certaine washings in his lawe, in the which hee profitably exercised his people in the meditation of true puritie. The Iewes not beeing content with this mediocrity,

mediocritie, added many other washinges, specially that no man should eate, except he had washed, as Marke declareth more plainly in the 7. chapter, and also appeareth in the 2. of Iohn. Also to this faulte was added a wicked confidence, because they hauing no regard of the spirituall worship of God, thought they had well discharged themselves, if they had set vp a figure in the place of God. And Christ not being ignorant that the contempt of this ceremony would be offensively taken, yet omitted the same, that he might shew that God made small account of the outward cleanness of the flesh, but required the spirituall righteousness of the heart.

39. *In deede yee Pharisees.* Christ doth not reprove the pharisees in this place, as he doth in Matth. & Mar. because they preposterously worshipped God with mens inuentions, & brake the lawe of God through their owne traditions: but he only toucheth their grosse hypocrisie, because they desired puritie but in the eyes of men, as if they had nothing to do with God. And this reproofe lighteth vpon all hypocrites, which establish a righteousness in the ceremonies commanded by God. And therefore Christ concludeth more then if he should haue saide that God is worshipped in vaine with the commandements of men: for he generally condemneth that error, that God should bee worshipped with ceremonies & not with faith and pure affection of the heart. And though the Prophets alwayes had a great controuersie about this matter with the Iewes: yet the disposition of men are so prone to hypocrisie, that proud error preuailed, that God should be pleased with outward worshippings void of faith. But chiefly they were so astonied in Christes time, that religiō then only stood in meere trifles. Therefore hee inueigheth against the Pharisees, which are busily occupied in washing the cuppes, & nourish inwardly in their hearts most filthy spots of rauening and wickednes. And he cōdemneth their folly by this reason, that God which created the inward soule of man, as well as the body, could not be pleased only with an outward shew. For this chiefly deceiue men, that either they do not consider that they haue to doe with God: or else they transforme him according to the vanity of their imaginatiō, as though he differed nothing from a mortall man.

41. *But of those things which are within.* Christe after his manner calleth the Pharisees backe from ceremonies to charitie, affirming that men, as well as meates, are not clefied with water but with loue. Yet he would not in those words lessen the grace of God, nor reiect the rites of the law as vaine and vnprofitable: for hee directeth his speech against them, which carelesly mocke at God with naked signes: as if he should haue said, it is only the lawfull vse which sanctifieth the meates. And they only do vse the meates rightly and iustly, which helpe the want of the poore with their aboundance. Therefore it were better to giue almes of that aboundance which we haue, then by scrupulous washing of hands and cuppes, to neglect the poore. That which the Papistes doe gather hereof, that almes are satisfactions by the which we are purged from sinnes, is so sonde, that it needeth no long confutation. For Christ disputeth not here, with what price it behooueth vs to obtaine forgiveness of sinnes: but that they doe eate their bread rightly, which bestow part vpon the poore. For I doe take the Greeke word here vsed, signifieth that which is presently had, and not as the olde interpreter and Erasmus doe translate it, for that which remaineth,

neth. It is best to reserve those reprooves which do presently follow for an other place. For I doe not thinke that Christ then presently at the table did so inuey against the Scribes and the Pharisees: but Luke set that downe here which was spoken at an other time: as wee haue often sayd that the Euangelistes regarded not the order of the time.

Mathew.

Marke,

Luke 14.

1. And it came to passe, that when he was entred into the house of one of the cheife Pharisees, on the sabboth day, to eate bread, they watched him.
2. And behold, there was a certaine man before him, which had the dropsie.
3. Then Iesus answering, spake vnto the expounders of the lawe, and Pharisees, saying: Is it lawfull to heale on the Sabboth day?
4. And they held their peace. Then he tooke him, and healed him, and let him goe.
5. And answered them, saying: which of you shall haue an Asse, or an Oxe falne into a pit, and will not straight way pull him out on the Sabboth day?
6. And they could not answer him to those thinges.

This historie containeth nothing else but a miracle wrought by Christ, when by he reproveth the superstitious obseruation of the Sabboth. Neyther was his purpose as some imagine, simply to abrogate the Sabboth: but onely to shewe that neither the worke of God, nor the duties of charitie doe violate the holy rest which is commanded in the law. Also it is vncertaine whether the manne which had the dropsie was purposely brought thither by their appointment: for certainly he could not come to the table by aduenture, nor enter into a priuate house without the leaue and will of the Lord of the same. Wherefore it is likely that he was brought thither craftely to tempt Christ, which yet was no lesse foolishly then wickedly done of them: because they had experience before what Christ was accustomed to doe, as oft as like occasion was offered.

5. *Is it lawfull to heale on the Sabboth day?* The meaning of the question is this, whether the healing of a manne ought to bee accounted amongst those workes which doe breake the Sabboth. If they should haue sayd that the obseruation of the Sabboth should be broken by this meanes, there was an exception ready, that it is the worke of God. And the law of the Sabboth containeth nothing else, but that men should rest from their owne labours. And Christ first asketh the question of them, that hee might thereby preuent the offence. Therefor the cause was not in him that they were not pleased, but in their obstinate malice. Not that he alwayes bound himselfe to this condition (for oftentimes not regarding the offence, he performed that which was inioyned him of his father): but his will was to teach by this example, that he wrought not his miracles on the Sabboth dayes rashly, but that he was ready to giue an account of what he did. But they do declare by their silence, that they had rather tak occasion to reprehend him, then to be moued by the study of the law. Therefore christ hath

not to regarde, what they iudge of his doing, because it is euident that they would willingly take occasion of offence.

5. *Which of you shall haue an Asse.* Though they were vnworthy that Christ should endeuour to mittigate their displeasures: yet he declarcth that hee hath done nothing against the obseruation of the Sabbath. All be it he doth this not so much of purpose to teach them, as that he might thereby deliuer himselfe frō their flauanders, for he knew that they shewed themselves rather to bee blinded with poysonfull hatred, then to yeelde themselves to be taught by reason: but his will was not to triumph ouer their malice, while he enforced thē for shame to hold their peace. For if it bee lawfull to helpe brute beastes on the Sabbath day, it were too vile a thing, not to doe the same dutie to man framed and made after the image of God.

Mathew.

Marke

Luke. 14.

7 He spake also a Parable to the guesſes, when he marked how they chose out the cheife rōumes, and sayd vnto them.

8. When thou shalt be bidden of any man to a wedding, set not thy selfe downe in the chiefeſt place, least a more honorable man then thou, bee bidden of him.

9. And hee that bidde both him and thee: come, and say to thee: Giue this man rōume, and thou then begin with shame to take the lowest rōume.

10 But when thou art bidden, goe and sit down in the lowest rōume, that when he that had thee commeth, hee may say vnto thee: Freind, sit vp hihger, then shalt thou haue worship in the presence of them that sit at table with thee.

11. For whoſoever exalteth himselfe, shall bee brought low, and he that humbleth himselfe, shall be exalted.

12. Then said he also to him that had bidden him, when thou makeſt a dinner or a supper, call not thy friends nor thy brethren, neither thy kinsmen, nor the rich neighbours, least they also bid thee againe, and a recompence be made thee.

13. But when thou makeſt a feast, call the poore, the maimed, the lame, and the blinde.

14. And thou shalt be blessed, because they can not recompence thee: for thou shalt bee recompenced at the resurrection of the iust.

7. Hee spake to the guesſes. Wee knowe howe greatly ambition raigned in all the Pharisees and the Scribes. That as they proudly desired to raigne ouer all men, there was also a contention mutually amongst themselves, which should be the cheifest. For men desirous of vaine glory haue this affection, that euery one of them doeth enuie eache other, while euery one of them desireth to drawe that to himselfe, which others thinke to bee due to them. So the Pharisees and Scribes, when they challenge that the people

people should giue vnto the the title of the holy order, now they strue amongst themselves for the degree of honour, because euery of them chaleng to himselfe the cheife place. Christ aptly derideth this their ambition with a fit similitude. For if any man occupy the cheife rounge at an other mans table, and then bee enforced to giue place to a better, he shall be set lower by the maister of the feast, not without shame and ignominie. And it is necessary that the same should befall to all them that proudly lift vp themselves to rule ouer others, for God shall cast them downe with shame. For it is to be noted, that Christ preacheth not heere of the outward and ciuill modestie: for we see the proudest men, oft times excell in this behalfe, and for ciuilitie, as they say, they pretende the greatest modestie. But by a similitude taken from the vie of men, hee teacheth vs what wee should bee inwardly before God: as if hee should say: If it befall vnto a guest, which foolishly chose the highest rounge, to bee thrust downe into the lowest, and with shame he desire that hee had neuer climed thither: therefore, least God put the same thing in practise amongst you, so that your arrogancy be stained with extreame ignominie, willingly submit your selues to humilitie and modestie.

11. *Whosoeuer exalteth himselfe.* This clause declareth that Christ spake of ambition: for he sheweth not what vsesh to befall in the common life of men: but heere he maketh God our iudge, who resisteth the proud, and pulleth down their proude lookes, but giueth grace to the humble. The scripture is full of such places, that God will be enemie to all them, which desire to lift vp themselves, so that of necessitie they must haue battell with God, which doe arrogate any thing to themselves. For this is the pride, so to glory in the giftes of God, as if there were any worthinesse in vs, which of our owne deserting should extoll vs: as againe, onely a feined casting downe, ought not to bee accounted humility, but the true humbling, that is, when we rightly acknowledge in our owne selues our owne infirmities, not lifting vp our selues, knowing that wee exceed by the onely grace of God.

12. *When thou makest a dinner.* They which thinke that those feasts are here simply condoned, which kinsfolkes & friends do make amongst themselves, doe take away that part of humanity from amongst men. For this were rather barbarous then austere: to shut thy kinsfolkes from thy table. & onely to giue place to strangers. Neither was it the purpose of Christ to driue vs from all neighbourhood, but onely to shew that charitie was little vsed in the ordinary dealings of the world: for as it is no liberality to bestow any thing vpon the rich men in hope of gaine, from whom we hope to receiue the like, but a kinde of vsurie: so those works for reward are not accounted of before God, nor are woorthy of the name of charitie. If I bid my kinsfolkes or rich friends to supper, it is humanity not of it selfe to be condemned, but it smally auayleth to prouoe charitie: for oft times wee see them which are wholly addicted to themselves, to bestow great charges in receiuing their friends most delicately, What then? thou maiest furnish thy table with rich men, so that in the meane season thou neglectest not the poore: so it is lawfull to feast with thy freindes and kinsfolkes, so that thou reiectest not strangers, if that they be poore, and thou hast habilitie to helpe their neede. The summe is, they which are liberall to their kins-

folkes and frendes, but are hard to the poore, are worthy of no prayse: because they exercise no charitie, but prouide onely for their owne gaine and ambition. But Christ speaketh to his host by name, whom hee saw was giuen too much to sumptuousnesse and to dainties, and so to get prayse and fauour of rich men, so that he smally regarded the poore. So vnder the person of this one man, are all they reprobod, which ambitiously spend those things they haue, either for their owne glory, or to get like recompence: and yet they will bestow nothing vpon the poore, as if they were afraid, that what soeuer they bestowed freely, were lost. Therefore Christ sayth that they are blessed, which are liberall with out hope of earthly rewarde: for it is euident that they haue regard to God. But there is no cause why they set theregard of profit before their eyes, or which desire the prayse of the people, should looke for any reward from God.

Matthew 22.

1. Then Iesus answered, and spake vnto them againe in Parables, saying
2. The kingdome of heauen is like vnto a certaine king, which married his son.
3. And sent forth his seruants, to call them that were bidden to the wedding but they would not come.
4. Again, he sent forth other seruants, saying, tel the which are bidden: behold I haue prepared my dinner, mine oxen and my fatlings are killed, & al things are ready: come vnto the mariage.
5. But they made light of it, and went their wayes, one to his Farme, and another about his marchandise.
6. And the remnant tooke his seruants and intreated them sharpely, and slew them.
7. But when the king heard it, he was wroth, and sent forth his warriours, & destroyed those murderers, and burnt vp their citie.
8. Then said he to his seruants. Truly the wedding is prepared: but they which were bidden, were not worthy.
9. Goe yee therefore out into the high wayes, and as many as yee finde, bid them to the mariage.
10. So those seruants went out into the high wayes and gathered together all that euer they found, both good & bad: so the wedding was furnished with guests

11. There

Marke

Luke 14.

15. Now, when one of them that sate at table, heard those things, he said vnto him: Blessed is hee that eateth bread in the kingdom of god
16. Then sayd he to him: a certaine man made a greatesupper, and bade many.
17. And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come: for all things are now readye.
18. But they all with one consent began to make excuse: The first sayd vnto him, I haue bought a Farme, and I must goe out and see it: I pray thee haue me excused.
19. And another sayd, I haue bought five yoke of oxen, and I goe to prooue them, I pray thee haue me excused.
20. And another sayde, I haue married a wife, and therefore I can not come.
21. So that seruant returned, & shewed his master these things. Then was the good manne of the house angrie, and sayde to his seruant: Goe out quickly into the places and streetes of the citie, and bring in hither the poore and the maimed, and the halles, and the blinde.

22. And

11. Then the king came in, to see the guests, and saw there a man, which had not on a wedding garment.

12. And he said vnto him: friend, how earnest thou in hither, & hast not on a wedding garment? And he was speechlesse.

13. Then said the king to the seruants: Binde him hand and foote: take him away, and cast him into utter darkenes: there shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth.

14. For many are called, but few are choise

22. And the seruant said: Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is roume.

23. Then the maiſter ſayd to the ſeruant: Goe out into the high wayes and hedges, and compell them to come in, that my houſe may bee filled.

24. For I ſay vnto you, that none of thoſe men which were bidden, ſhall taſt of my ſupper.

1. Then Ieſus answered. Though Matthew rehearſeth this parable amongſt other Sermons made by Chriſte about the laſt Paſſeouer: yet becauſe hee appoynteth no time, and that Luke expreſſly affirmeth that he ſpake this when he ſate at the Pharifies table, it ſeemeth beſt to follow this order. Alſo, becauſe the purpoſe of Matthew was to ſhewe for what cauſe the Scribes were kindled with extreme madneſſe amongſt other his odious Sermons he ſet downe this alſo, and brought it into that courſe, neglecting the order of the time. This hiſtory ſet downe by Luke, is to bee noted, that when one of the gueſtes hadde ſayde, that they are bleſſed which eate bread in the kingdome of God, Chriſt tooke occaſion therby to reprove the vnthankfulnes of the Iewes. And though it bee ſcarce credible that the Pharifies gueſt and friend ſhould breake out into theſe wordes, of an earnest affection of godlineſſe: yet it ſeemeth not to me to be ſpoken in ſcorne or ieſt: but as men touched with a ſmall faith, & not openly wicked, doe without regard ſpeake amongſt their cuppes, of eternall life: ſo I thinke that this man caſt out this ſpeech of the bleſſedneſſe to come, that he might gather ſomewhat from Chriſt. And his words do declare that he as yet ſauoured nothing, but that which was groſſe and earthly. For he uſeth not the phraſe, to eate bread Metaphorically, for the enioying of the eternall glory: but he ſeemeth to dream I know not of what ſtate replenished with prosperous abundance of all things. Yet the meaning is, that they are happy which eate the bread of God, after he hath gathered his children into his kingdome.

2. The kingdome of heauen is like. As that Spartane ſayd in times paſt, that the Athenians knew what thinges were right, but would not doe them: ſo Chriſte here reproveth the Iewes, that they could ſpeake many notable wordes of the kingdome of God: but when God calleth them louingly and gently vnto him, they contemptuouſly reſuſe his grace. And it is not to bee doubted but that hee pincheth the Iewes by name, as ſhall better appeare ſomewhat after. But Matthew differeth from Luke in this, that he ſetteth downe many circumſtances, when the other doth ſummarily only propoſe the matter it ſelfe. So Mat. ſayth that a king prepared a marriage ſupper for his ſonne. Luke doth ſimply make mention of a feaſt. He maketh mention of many ſeruants, this ſpeaketh not but of one. He noteth many ſendings, this but onely one. He ſayth that ſome of the ſeruantes were beaten or ſlaine, this ſpeaketh onely of the contempt.

Lastly, hee reporteth that hee was cast out, which came into the feast without his marriage garment, of whome there is no mention in Luke. But wee haue other where noted also the like difference, when as Matthew hath beene more plentifull and large in entreating the same matter. But in the summe they agree very well, that when God had vouchsafed a peculiar honour to the Iewes, preparing as it were a banquetting boarde for them, they despised the honour of. fered them. That many interpreters doe apply the mariage of the kings sonne to this, that Christe was the end of the lawe, and that God had not regard to any other purpose, in his couenant, then that hee might set him ouer his people, and might ioine his Church to him in a holy band of spirituall mariage, I doe willingly embrace and allow. And that hee sayeth that his seruants were sent out to call them that were bidden, in these words he noteth a double grace of God: to witte that hee preferred the Iewes before other nations, then that hee reuealed vnto them their adoption by the Prophets. For hee alludeth to the vsuall manner of menne, which making mariage feastes, doe write downe a catalogue of them, whom they woulde haue for their guesstes: then they bid them by their seruants. So God chose the Iewes before all others, as though they should be his familiar friendes. then he calleth them by his Prophets, that they might be partakers of the promised redemption, which was to bee feasted at the mariage. And though they which were first called, liued not vnto the coming of Christe: yet we know that the saluation was proposed in comon to all, whercof they were deprived by their vnthankfulnesse and malice: for that people wickedly despised the calling of God from the beginning.

4. *Again hee sent forth others.* Hee speaketh so, as if they were the same menne, because it was one body of the people. But the meaning is, when that happy and ioyfull day of redemption drevve neare, they were warned that they might be ready in time: for the time was appointed them long before. And now Christ sayeth that they were called at the very poyn of the time, that they might hast to come. For the first calling whereof he maketh mention, comprehendeth all the former Propheties to the preaching of the Gospell. And though that people hadde raged against the Prophets, yet hee accuseth the elde people onely of pride and contempt, because their fury increaseth with the time, which at length was powred with all violence vpon Christ and the Apostles. But hee sayth that the seruants which were sent last, euen at supper time, were sharply entreated and slaine: so when as outrageous crueltie was ioined to the proude reiecting of the grace, that people brake out into the extreamest sinnes. Yet he layeth not this offence vpo them all together: for in the last calling which was by the Gospell, the grace of God was partly reiecte by carelesse contempters, & partly reiecte furiously by hypocrits. And so commeth commonly to passe, that the more God calleth the wicked to saluation, the more they breake out against him. Now that part of doctrine is to be entreated which is both in Matthew and Luke: to wit, that one went to his farme, another to his husbandrie: or as Luke reporteth, one excused himselfe that he had married a wife, an other hadde bought a Farme, an other had bought five yoke of oxen. By these words Christ declareth that the Iewes were so giuen to the worlde and earthly things, that none of them had leasure to come to God. As while the cares of the world

doe

doe hold vs bound, they are so many allurements to withdraw vs from the kingdome of heauen. But it is a vile and a shamefull matter, that men created for the heauenly life, should as beastes be caried to transitory things. but this disease is spread euery where, so that one scarce of a hundred, preferreth the kingdome of God before vaine riches, or other commodities. And though all haue not the same disease, yet euery one is caried by his own couetousnes into a contrary course: so it cometh to passe that men run out of order hither and thither. Furthmore, it is to be noted that prophane men make shew of honest pretences, for the refusing of the grace of God, as though their sloth were to be excused, which applying themselves to the affaires of this present life, doe little esteeme the heauenly inheritance. But we see that Christ, that hee might draw vs from such delights, teacheth that no man should thinke with himselfe that hee hath profited any thing, while they entangle themselves with these earthly hinderances. Nay, the fault of men is doubled, while they hinder themselves with things which are otherwise lawfull, by the which they ought rather to be holpen. For to what ende doth God grant vs the commodities of this present life, but that he might allure vs vnto him? but euery man is so farre from being holpe so by the benefits of God, that he should aspire to heauen, that the holy mariages, the fields, and the other riches, are so many snares which do hold men bound to the earth.

7. *But when the king heard it* Mathew only maketh mention of this punishment. For in Luke there is no word spoken of iniurie done to the seruants. They both say this, that they were excluded & deprived from the honor of the feast, which came not at the time appointed. And this doctrine is also common to vs, for the same destruction which Christ pronounceth against the Iewes, remaineth for all those wicked ones, which doe violently rise against the ministers of the Gospel. And they which are withdrawn with earthly cares, so that they regard not the calling of God, al these as famished men, shal at length miserably waite away for want. Therefore so oft as he calleth vs, let vs be ready and glad to follow.

9. *Goe ye therefore out into the high wayes.* After he hath shewed them to be unworthy of the grace of God, which doe proudly refuse the same offered vnto them, now he sayth others shall be placed in their roome, and euen the most base and contemptible of the common people. And heere is the calling of the Gentiles described, which should prouoke the Iewes to ieaousie, as it is sayd in the song of Moses, Deut. 32. 21. They haue moued mee to ieaousie with those which are no Gods: and I againe will moue them to ieaousie, with those which are no people, I will prouoke them to anger with a foolish nation. Because they were first chosen, they imagined that his grace was so tied to them as if God could not be without them, and it is knowne how proudly they despised all others. Therefore vpon a graunt hee compareth the Gentiles to beggers, blinde and lame. And hee sayth they are called out of the hedges and high wayes as forenners and strangers: and yet hee affirmeth that they shoulde be placed in the roome despised by the friends and neighbours. So that which was more darkely forespoken of by the Prophets, of erecting a new Church, he setteth downe more plainly. And certainly this reproofe was the heape of the vengeance of God, Romanes 11. 17. that God cutting them off,

hath grafted the wilde branches into the roote of the Oliue, & by casting the out, he receiueth the polluted and filthy Gentiles into his owne house. If that hee spared not the naturall branches then, the same vengeance shall fall on vs now, if wee answer not our calling. And the supper shall not bee lost, which was prepared for vs, but God will procure himselfe other guests.

L V K. 23. *Compell them to come in.* This is as much as if the housholder should command to bring in the beggers with hard words, & to leaue out none of the worst of the. In which words Christ declar. th, that God will rather gather together all the offcoursings of the world, then that he would admit those vathankfull men to his table. Yet he seemeth to allude to the maner of the calling of the gospell, because the grace of God is not simply proposed vnto vs, but to the doctrine, there are also added spurres of exhortations, in which the wonderfull goodness of God is seene, who when hee seeth vs that are called to him, to bee slouthfull, he solli. i. ith vs importunately from slouthfulnesse: and he doth not onely stirre vs with exhortations, but also he compelleth vs by threatnes to come to him. Yet I doe not disallow that Augustine vsed this testimonie very often against the Donatists, that hee might proue that the disobedient and rebellious might be lawfully compelled by the Edictes of godly princes, to the worship of the true God, and to the vnitie of faith: for though faith is voluntary, yet we see their stubbernesse may well be tamed by these meanes, which obey not except they be compelled.

M A T. 11. *Then the king came to see the guests.* Nowe Christ doth not heere reprove the Iewes, for despising wickedly the grace and calling of God: but hee forewarneth them betime, which were to bee placed in their rounge, least when God should vouchsafe to make them partakers of his owne table, they should defile the holy mariages with their filthines. Therefore he hath taught hitherto that the Iewes for their wicked contempt, should bee deprived of that special priuledge of honor: and that he would call of the prophane & reiected Gentiles, which should succcede in their place. And now he declareth that of this number also they shall bee cast out, which doe defile the church: for when God calleth al men generally by the gospell, many vnleane & filthy men thrust in, which though they occupy a place for a time amongst others, when God ouerseeeth his guests, they are cast out of doores, and throwne to punishment. The summe is. Not all they which shall once enter into the church, shall bee partakers of the heauenly life, but they which shall be found attired fit for the heauenly palace. Also there is a contention in vain about the marriage garmēt, whether it should be faith, or a holy and godly life: for neither faith can be seperated from good works, & good works do not proceede but from faith. But this only was the meaning of Christ, that we are called of the Lord, of this condition, that we might be renewed in spirit according to his image, & that we should therefore alwaies remaine at his house, that the old man with his pollutions should be put off, & that we should meditate a new life, that the apparell might answer to so holy a calling. But it is demanded how it should agree that the begger should be punished with so seuer a punishmēt, because he brought not a marriage garmēt: as though it were a new thing for those wretches which seeke their liuing in the high waies to be torne and deformed? I answer, heere is not declared whence that garment should haue bin had: for whomsoeuer the Lord calleth, he also apparelleth,

leth, & fulfilleth all things in vs, as is saide by Ezechiel, 16. 7. when God founde nothing in vs but miserable nakednesse, & filthy spots, he hath cloathed vs with excellent ornaments. We know also that the image of God is not otherwise repayed in vs, but whē we put on Christ. Therefore christ doth not say, that those poore men shall be cast out, which bring not a precious garment fetched out of their owne chest, but they which are found in their sins, when God shall come to examine his guests. And the conclusion doth shew the ende of the parable, there are few chosen, though many are called. Whereby we gather that all the peticular clauses of the same are not to be searched subtilly: for Christ said not before, that the greater part should be cast out, but only maketh mentio of one: but here we heare, that of a great nūber few are retained. And certainly, though at this day more are gathered into the church by the voyce of the Gospell, then were in times past by the law, yet very few approue their faith by newnes of life. Wherefore let vs not flatter our selues with a vaine title of faith, but let euery mā diligētly examine himselfe, that in the last choise, he may be accounted amongst the lawfull guests. For as Paul admonisheth, 2. Tim. 2. 19. 20. the vessels in the house of the Lord, are not all of one sort, therefore let euery one that calleth on the name of the Lord depart frō iniquity. I do not here dispute further of the eternall election of God, because the words of Christ tend not to any other purpose, then that the outward profession of faith sufficeth not, that God should acknowledge for his, whosoever seeme to haue giuen their name to his calling.

Math.

Marke.

Luke. 16.

1. And he said also vnto his disciples: There was a certaine rich manne, which had a steward, and hee was accused vnto him, that he wasted his goods.
2. And he called him, and said thus vnto him: How is it that I heare this of thee? Giue an account of thy stewardship, for thou maiest be no longer steward.
3. Then the steward sayde within himselfe: what shall I do: for my maister will take from me the stewardship? I cannot dig, & to beg I am ashamed. 4. I know what I will do, that whē I am put out of the stewardship, they may receiue me into their houses. 5. Then cald he euery one of his masters debtors, and said vnto the first. How much owest thou vnto my master? 6. And he said, an 100. measures of oyle. & he said to him: take thy wryting, & sit down quickly, & write 50. 7. Then saide hee to another. How much owest thou? And he said an 100. measures of wheat. Then he said to him. Take thy wryting, & write foure score.
8. And the Lord commended the vnjust steward, because hee had done wisely: wherefore the children of this world, are in their generatiō, wiser then the childrē of lighe.
9. And I say vnto you, make you friendes of the riches of iniquity, that when yee shall want, they may receiue you into euerlasting habitations.
10. Hee that is faithfull in the least, hee is also faith-

full in much: and he that is vnjust in the least, is vnjust also in much.

11. If then ye haue not bene faithfull in wicked riches, who will trust you in the true treasure?

12. And if yee haue not bene saythfull in an other mans goods, who will giue you that which is yours?

Somewhat after.

14. All these things heard the Pharisees also which were conetous, and they mocked him.

15. Then he sayd vnto them, yee are they which iustifie your selues before men: but God knoweth your hearts: for that which is highly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God.

The summe of this Parable is, that wee should deale lovingly & kindly with our neighbours, that when we shall come to the tribunall seat of God, the fruite of our liberalitie may returne vpon vs. And though the similitude seeme to be hard and far fetched: Yet the end sheweth that christ had no other purpose in it. And hereby we perceiue that they apply themselves too fondly, which in parabes do scrupulously sift out all periculus poyntes. For Christe comandereth not here by liberall gifts to redeeme, deceits, thefts, prodigall spending & other offences of an euill stewardship: but when as God hath made vs stewards to bestow all those goodes which he giueth vnto vs: here is a meane prescribed vnto vs, which in time when the count day shall come, shall ease some from extreme rigor. For they which imagin that almes shall make a recourence for a luxurious & dissolute life, do not sufficiently consider, that this is first enioyned to vs, that we should liue soberly & temperately: then that waters should flow vnto vs out of a pure fountaine. It is certaine that no man is so thrifty, which shall not sometime lose the goods laid vp with him: & therefore euen they which apply themselves to the greatest sparing, are not altogether free from euill bestowing. Adde also, that there are manifold abuses of the gifts of God, so that some comit offence an other way, & I deny not, but as we finde our selues guiltie of euil bestowing: so this should the rather stirre vs vp to the duties of charity. But we ought to set an other end before vs, then that wee should by paying the price of redemption escape the iudgement of God: to wit, that liberality being wel & holily bestowed, should only bridle and correct superfluous expences: then, that our kindnes towards the brethren, might prouoke the mercy of God towards vs. Wherefore the Lord doth not here shew his disciples a way to escape, whereby they might deliuer themselves from guiltines, when the heavenly iudge shall aske an account of the, but he warneth them to take heed betime, least they beare the punishment of their cruelty, if they betaken wastfully spoyling the blessings of God, no way applying them to good vse. For this is alwayes to be holden: What measure any man meareth to others, it shall be measured to him againe, *Matth. 7. 2.*

8. The Lord commended. It is here also easie to see that he shall do very fondly, that shall stand vpon each particular poyntes. For sith, that to giue of an other mans goods, is nothing prayse worthy, who would beare it with a patient mind to be spoyled by a wicked varler, that at his pleasure should release his debtes?

This.

This certainly were a token of too grosse blockishnesse, that any manne should see part of his substance spoyled, and to allow that the rest shoulde bee stolne from him, and giuen to others. But this was the only purpose of Christ, which he addeth presently after, that men prophane and giuen to the worlde are wiser and warier in looking to the accountes of this transitory life, then the children of God are carefull of the heavenly and eternall life, or bent to the studie and meditation of the same. For, by this comparison he vpbraydeth vs of our slouthfulnesse beyond all reason, that at least we haue not like care to provide for that to come, which prophane men haue in providing for themselves in this world. For how vile a thing is it, that the children of light, in whom God shineth by his spirit and his word, should slow and neglect the hope of eternall blessednesse offered them, when as worldly men are so greedily caried to their commodities, and are so provident and wise about the same? Hereby we gather that the wisdom of the spirit and of the flesh are not compared together (which could not be without the reproofe of God himselfe) but that the faithfull are onely stirred vpp more willingly to consider those things, which appertain to the life to come, and that they should not shut their eyes at the light of the Gospell, when they see blinde menne to see better in the darke then they. And truly it behooueth them to bee the more affected, when they see the children of the world to see longe before for this life, which is transitory, and which passeth away in a moment.

9. *Make you friends.* As Christe commaunded not heretofore to offer sacrifices to God of things stolne: so now hee meaneth not, that eyther excusers or patrons shoulde bee sought for, which should hide and defend vs vnder their defence: but he teacheth that by bestowing louingly, that the fauour of God is obtained, who promisseth that he likewise will be mercifull to them that are mercifull and kinde. But very fondly and absurdly doe they reason, which doe gather of this, that we are holpen by the prayers and suites of them that are dead: for, so whatsoeuer is bestowed vpon the vnworthy, should be lost. But the wickednesse of the men hinder not, but that the Lord writeth vppe in his tables whatsoeuer we bestow vppon the poore. Therefore the Lord hath not regard to the persons, but to the worke it selfe, so that our leuing kindnesse shall answer vs before God, yea, though it fall vppon vnthankfull men. But so it seemeth to signifie, that eternall life is giuen as a recompence to our deserts. I answer, it appeareth plainly enough by the text, that hee speaketh after the manner of men, to wit, as hee which is exalted by fauour and riches, if hee gett himselfe friends in his prosperous estate, he hath when he falleth into aduersitie, by whom he shall bee sustained: so our kindnes shall bee to vs a conuenient refuge: because whatsoeuer any man shall bestow liberally vpon his neighbours, the Lord acknowledgeth the same, as bestowed vppon himselfe.

When yee shall want. By this woorde hee noteth the time of death, and hee warneth vs that the time of our stewardshippe shall bee but shorte. For whereof commeth it to passe, that the greater parte sleepe in their riches, many waste that they haue in prodigall expences, others by hoarding. it doe maliciously defraude themselves and others, but because they beeing deceived with a false imagination of along life, doe flatter themselves.

in securitie ? Hee calleth them the riches of iniquitie, that hee might make vs to suspecte riches, because that for the most part they entangle their owners in iniquitie. For though they are not euill of themselves: yet because they are seldome gotten without deceite or violence, or other vnlawfull meanes, & are also rarely possessed and kept without pride or luxuriousnesse, or some other wicked affection, Christe causeth vs worthily to suspecte them, as in an other place he also calleth them thornes. *Matth. 13. 22.* Yet heere seemeth to bee vnderstood an opposition, as if he should haue sayd, riches which otherwise detile the owners through the wicked abuse, and are almost the snares of sinnes, must be turned to a contrary end, that they might get vs fauour. Furthermore, that must be remembred, which I layd before, that God desireth not a sacrifice of a pray vniustly gotten, as if he should be a companion of theeues: and therefore it is rather an admonition to the faithfull, that they should preserue themselves free from iniquitie.

10. *Hee that is faithfull in the least.* They are prouerbiall sentences gathered of the common vse and experience: and therefore it sufficeth that they bee true for the most part. For it shall befall sometimes, that the deceiuer not accounting of a small gaine, shall shew forth his wickednes in a great matter: yea, & many in small matters vnder pretence of simplicitie do hunt after great gaine: as Lewi saith, fraud getteth credit in small matters, that when it is worthy the labour, it may deceiue for a greater reward. Yet not withstanding the laying of Christ is not false: because in prouerbes, as I sayd, we follow that which is most commonly vsed. Christ therefore exhorteth his disciples, that by dealing faithfully in small matters, they might accustome themselves to bee faithfull in the greatest matters. Then he applyeth this doctrine to the right dispensing of spirituall graces, which though the world esteeme not according to the value: yet it is certaine that they farre excell the transitory riches of the world. And hee teacheth that they are vnmeete, that God should commit the incomparable treasure of his Gospell, and of like gifts to them, which deale naughtily and vnfaithfully in matters of lesse value, as are the fleeting riches of the world. Therefore there is included in these wordes a secret threatening, that it is to be feared, least for the abuse of the earthly stewardshippe, wee should bee deprived of the heavenly giftes. In which sence the heavenly blessednesse is opposed against riches, but as a perfect and perpetuall good thing against a shadow and transitory matter.

12. *If ye be not faithfull in an other mans goods.* Hee calleth that an other mans, which is without man: for God doth not giue vs riches of this condition, that we should be tyed vnto them: but so hee made vs stewardes of them, least they should hold vs bound in their bandes. And it cannot be, that mindes free and at liberty should dwell in heauen, except they account what soeuer is in the world to belong to others. And hee maketh the spirituall riches, which belong to the life to come to be ours: because the enioying of them is eternall. But nowe hee vseth an other similitude, it is not to bee hoped that wee should vse our owne goodes well and moderately, if we deale yll and vnfaithfully with other mens. For menne vse more carelessly to abuse their owne, and they graunt themselves more liberty in loosing them: because they are not afrayde that
any

any man should reprove them. But they are more wary and more fearefull of that, which is layd vp with them, or committed to the or lent to them, of which things there must an account be giuen againe. Therefore we vnderstand the meaning of Christ, that they will be but euill keepers of spirituall gistes, which doe dispose the earthly goods euill. After there is a sentence set downe, that no man can serue God and riches, which I haue expounded in the sixt chapter of Mar. And let the readers see there what this word *Mammon* significeth.

14. *All these things heard the Pharisees,* They which thinke that the Pharisees scorned Christ, because he taught in common and rude speech, and gloried not in swelling words, do not sufficiently consider Lukes wordes. I grant that the doctrine of the Gospell seemeth very contemptible to proude and disdainfull men. But Luke expressely declareth that Christ was therefore scorned of them, because they were couetous. For they being thoroughly perswaded and settled in this, that they were blessed, which were rich, and therefore that there was not a better thing, then to increase their substance by any meanes, and couetously to hold those gotten goods. whatsoeuer Christ should say to the contrary, they reiected as absurd paradoxes. And certainly, whoeuer speaketh of despising riches or giuing to the poore, seemeth to the couetous to meane deceit. That saying of Horace is well known, the people hisserh me, but I reioyce to my selfe. If that they which are condemned in the iudgement of all men, doe yet please themselves, how much more shall they scorn as at a fable, this wisdom of Christ which is so farre from the minde of the common sort? Yet this I doubt not but that the Pharisees pretended some other colour, that they might merily iest at his doctrine against their sinne. Yet it is to be noted what moued them to it: for this disease raigned almost alwayes in the world, that the greater part of men apply themselves to scorne that which agreeth not to their manners. Heereof commeth it, that the word of God is in danger of so many reproofes, taunts, & furious scornes: because euery man striueth for the defence of their owne sins, and they thinke with their owne iesting speeches, as with a cloud to couer and hide their owne offence.

15. *Yee are they which iustifie your selues.* Wee see that Christ giueth no place to their pride, but constantly defendeth the authoritie of his doctrine against their scornes: which all ministers of the Gospell must also do, by setting the terrible iudgement of God against wicked contemners. And hee affirmeth that the coloured deceit, wherwith they deceiue the eyes of men, shal not profit them any thing in the iudgement of God: they would not bee thought in their scornings, that they defended their couetousnes: but Christ teacheth that this venome brake out of their hidden lyle. As if any man should say to the horned Bythops at this day, that they are not such enemies to the Gospel, because their odious dealings are too sharply pricked. And he sayth, that they think it inough if they appeare honest to men, and that they may set themselves out with a feigned holines: but from God, who is the searcher of the hearts, they cannot hide those sinnes, which they hide from the world. Where is also to bee noted the difference betweene the iudgments of God and of men: for where men are pleased with outward shewes, nothing is approoued at the iudgement seate of God, but a sincere heart.

There

There followeth a notable sentence, what soeuer is rightly esteemed among men, is abomination in the sight of God: not that God refuseth the vertues, whose praise he hath imprinted in the hearts of men: but because God abhorreth whatsoeuer man extolleth of his owne iudgement, whereby it appeareth how much all fained worshippings are to be accounted of, which the worlde hath framed of her owne deuice. For though they please the inuenters, Christ sayth, they are not onely vaine, and not to bee accounted of before God, but also abominable.

Mathew.

Marke

Luke. 16.

19. There was a certaine rich man, which was clothed in purple and fine linen, and fared well and delicately euery day.

20. Also there was a certaine begger, named Lazarus, which was layd at his gate full of sores.

21. And desired to bee refreshed with the crumms that fell from the rich mans table: yea, and the dogs came & licked his sores.

22. And it was so, that the begger died, and was carried by the Angels into Abrahams bosome. The rich man also dyed, and was buried:

23. And being in hell in torment, he lift vp his eyes, and saw Abraham a far off, and Lazarus in his bosome.

24. Then hee cryed, and sayd, Father Abraham, haue mercy on me, and send Lazarus, that hee may dippe the tip of his finger in water, and coole my tongue: for I am tormented in this flame.

25. But Abraham sayde, Sonne, remember that thou in thy life time receiuedst thy pleasures, and likewise Lazarus paines: now therefore is hee comforted, and thou art tormented.

26. Besides all this, betweene you and vs there is a great gulfe set, so that they which would goe from hence to you cannot, neither can they come from thence to vs.

27. Then hee sayd, I pray thee therefore father, that thou wouldest send him to my fathers house.

28. (For I haue five brethren) that he may testify vnto them, least they also come vnto this place of torment.

29. Abraham sayd vnto him, they haue Moses and the Prophets: let them heare them.

30. And he sayd, nay, father Abraham: but if one come from the dead, they would amend their liues.

31. Then he sayd vnto him, if they heare not Moses & the Prophets, neither will they be perswaded, though one should rise from the dead againe.

Though

Though Luke hath set downe some other things betweene, yet it is not to be doubted, but that he confirmeth the former sermon by this example. For he sheweth what portion remaineth for the, which hauing no regard of the poore, do wholly wast themselves in dainty delicacies which being giuen to surfeitings and pleasures, doe suffer their neighbours to be in miserable hunger: yea, they famish them cruelly, whom they hauing abilitie ought to helpe. And though it seeme to some to be but a simple parable: yet, because the name of Lazarus is set downe, I rather thinke it to be the report of a matter done. But in that matter there is small importance, so that the readers do hold the summe of the doctrine. First, the rich man is brought in, cladde with purple and fine linnen, and filling himselfe with pleasant deinties every day. In which wordes is noted the delicate life, filled with pleasure and with pompes. Not that all finenes & gorgeousnes of apparell of it selfe displeaseth God, or that all delicacie of meates were damnable: but because it seldome falleth out, that temperance is kept in these things. For he which desireth gorgeousnes in newe garments, shall as with prouocation's encrease lust: & it can scarcely be otherwise, but that he shuld throw himselfe into intemperancy, which delighteth in deinties, & in tables delicately filled. Yet his cruelty is especially condemned, in that hee suffered Lazarus poore, and full of sores to lie without at the gate. For Christ set together these contraries, amongst themselves: that the rich manne giuen to belly cheare and pompes, as a gulfe not to be filled, shoulde deuour within great heapes: but hee was not touched with the want and miseries of Lazarus, but wittingly and willingly suffered him to starue with hunger, colde, and stinch of sores. And in this maner doth Ezech. 16. 49. accuse Sodom, that in fulnes of bread & wine, she stretched not forth her hand to the poore. It is well knowne that the inhabitants of the East were wont to vse most fine linen for gorgeousnes & pompe: which maner the sacrificing Papistes counterfeted in their garments, which they call surpluses.

21. *And the dogges came.* The hard and yron cruelty of the rich man was sufficiently condemned before, in that so miserable a spectacle could not moue him to compassion. For, if there hadde beene any droppe of humanitie in him, he should haue commaunded at the leaste, that some of the fragments of his kitchen should haue beene giuen to the manne in that misery. But here was a heape of wicked and more then beastly cruelty, now not to learne mercy of the dogges. Neither is there any doubt, but that these dogges were directed by the secrete counsell of God, to condemne him by their example. And Christ heere alleadgeth them as a testimonie to reprocue the cursed hardnesse of the manne. For, what is more wonderfull, then that dogges shoulde haue care of a manne, which is neglected by his neighbour? yea, hee would not giue the crummes of his bread to this hungry manne, to whome the dogs lent their tongues to helpe to heale him. Therefore as oft as either strangers or brute beasts doe take our rournes, and doe that which wee shoulde rather haue done, lette vs know that there are so many witnesses and iudges appoynted by God against vs, which shall the more discover our faulte.

22. *And it was so that the begger died.* Christe declareth heere how much the estate of them both was chaunged by death. Death was common to them

them both: but for the dead to be caried by the angels into Abrahams bosome, is a felicitie more to be desired then all kingdomes. And to bee condemned to eternall torments, is a horrible thing, & to be redeemed with a hundred liues, if it were possible. And in the person of Lazarus there is a notable instruction giuen vs, that wee should not thinke them to be curfed before God, which doe painefully leade a life filled with troubles through continuall sorrowes. For the grace of God was so hid in him, and oppressed with the deformity of the crosse, and reproues, that the wisedome of the flesh could apprehend nothing but the curse: but we see howe precious a soule lay hidde in a filthy and rotten body, which is caried by the Angelles into a blessed life. Wherefore it hurt him no thing: as one forsaken and despysed to be without all helpe & comfort of man, vppon whome departing out of the prison of the flesh, the heauenly spirites vouchsafed to bee ready present to helpe. Againe, in the rich manne is seene, as in a notable glasse, howe that temporall felicitie, which endeth with eternall destruction is not to be desired. Yet it is to be noted that Christ maketh expresse mention of the buriall of the rich manne, what became of Lazarus he concealeth: not that his body lay in the open fieldes, as cast out to wilde beasts: but because it was without regarde and honour cast into a pitte (for this may easily bee gathered by the rest, that they would bestow no more labour about him being dead, then they did cost of him being aliue) on the other part the rich manne was sumptuously buried according to his riches, hee hath yet a remnant of his former pride. For in this behalfe wee see prophane menne struing after a sorte against nature, in that in the glory of their buryall and funerall solemnities, they desire to haue shewes remaining of their estate: but howe foolish and ridiculous this their ambition is, their soules in hell can witnesse. That hee sayeth Lazarus was caried, it is a figuratiue speech: for because the soule is the better part of manne, it doeth well challenge to it selfe the name of the whole. And Christe assigneth this office to the Angels not in vaine, which we know are giuen as ministers to the faithfull, to employ their studies and labours for their saluation.

Into Abrahams bosome. To reposite howe diuersly many interpreters of the Scripture haue defined of the bosome of Abraham, it is not needfull, nor in my iudgement profitable. It shall suffice to hold that which the readers well exercised in the scriptures doe acknowledge to bee the naturall meaning. For, as Abraham is therefore called the father of the faithfull: because the couenant of eternall life was first laide vppe with him, that being kept in faithfull custody, hee shoulde deliuer it first to his sonnes, then by hande to all the Gentiles, and whosoeuer are heires of the same promise, are called the sonnes of Abraham: so after death they are saide to be gathered into his bosome: because they receiue the fruit of the same faith with him.

It is a Metaphor taken of a Father, into whose bosome, as it were; the children doe come together, when they come home at the euenning from their daily labours. Therefore, sith the children of GOD doe traualle as Pylgrimes scattered in the woorld, as in this present race they followe the sayth of Abraham their Father, so departing they goe into

into that blessed rest, wherein he looketh for them. Neither is it necessary to imagine any certaine place: but that gathering of the Saints together is only noted, that the faithfull might knowe indeede that they warre not in vaine vnder the conduct of the faith of Abraham: for they inioy the same place in heauen.

If it be demanded whether the godly at this day doe after death inioy the same estate, or whether Christ by his resurrection shoulde open his owne bosome, wherein aswell Abraham himselfe, as all the other godly should rest: I answere breifly, as the grace of GOD shone more clearly vnto vs by the Gospell, and Christ the very Sonne of righteousness by his coming brought vs saluation, which was granted to the fathers in times past, to behold a farre off vnder darke shadowes: so it is not to bee doubted, but that the dead came neerer to the full fruition of the heauenly life. Yet it is to bee noted, that the glory of immortalitye is deferred vnto the last day of the resurrection. In respect of the name, that quiet haue, which receiue the faithfull out of the nauigation of this present life, may bee called aswell the bosome of Abraham, as of Christ. But because wee are growne higher then the father vnder the lawe, this distinction is the applier noted: if wee the members of Christe should bee sayd to bee gathered to their head: and as the light of the sunne at his rising darkeneth all the starres, so the metaphor of Abrahams bosome should then cease. Yet by this phraze of speech, which Christ vseth, it may bee gathered, that the fathers vnder the lawe embraced by faith (while they liued) the inheritance of the heauenly life whereinto they were receiued at their death.

23. *And being in hell in tormentes, he lift vpp his eyes.* Although Christ telleth a historie, yet he describeth spirituall things by figures, which hee knew to bee fit for our capacite. For soules neither haue fingers nor eyes, neither are thirsty neyther haue they mutuall speech amongst themselves, as is here described betweene Abraham and the glutton. But the Lorde heere paynteth out a table, which representeth the estate of the life to come, according to the measure of our vnderstanding. But the summe is, that the soules of the faithfull, when they doe goe out of the body, doe lead a ioyfull and a blessed life out of the worlde: and that there are horrible tormentes prepared for the reprobate, which can no more be conteaued in our mindes, then can the great glory of the heauens. For as we onely in very small measure, to wit, as wee are lightened by the spirite of God, do taste by hope the glory promised to vs, which farre exceedeth all our senses: so let it suffice that the incomprehensible vengeance of God, which remaineth for the wicked, be knowne darkely of vs: euen so as it is meete to strike a terror into vs. So the words of Christ doe giue a taste and a small knowledg of these things, and yet such as may suffice to bridle curiositie: to wit, that the wicked are cruelly tormented with the feeling of their owne misery, that they should desire some refreshing, yet all hope being taken away, they feelee double torment: yea, and they are the more tormented, while they are inforced to remember their owne sinnes, and to compare the present blessednes of the faithfull with their owne miserable and damnable estate.

This was the purpose and ende of the description of this talke, as if this shoulde haue passed betweene them, which haue no fellowship betweene them.

themselves. In that also that the rich man calleth Abraham father, there is expressed an other torment of his, that now too late hee feeleth himselfe reiected out of the number of the children of Abraham.

25. *sonne, remember.* The name of sonne seemeth to be set downe in derision that it might bee a sharpe reproofe for to pinch the rich man, who gloried falsly in his life, that hee was one of the children of Abraham. For his mind is wounded as with the blow of a burning hot yron, while his hypocrisie and deceitfull trust is objected to him, and set before his eyes. And that he is sayd to be tormented in hell, because he receiued his pleasure in this world, may not so be taken, as if eternall destruction remayned for all them, which liue well and prosperously in the world: nay, as Augustine noted very wisely, the poore Lazarus is therefore caried into the bosome of rich Abraham, that we might know that riches shut the gate of the kingdome of heauen against no man: but that it is generally open to all men, which doe either vse their riches soberly, or doe beare their wants patiently. The onely meaning is, because hee being drunke with the inticements of this life, drowned himselfe in earthly delights, and despised God and his kingdome, he now suffereth the punishmentes of his careles dealing. Therefore the pronounne *thy*, is very forcible: as if Abraham should haue sayd, when thou wast created to immortall life, and the law of God should haue lift thee vp to meditate the heauenly life, thou being forgetfull of so excellent a lot, hadst rather be like a swine or a dogge: therefore thou receiuest iust reward for thy brutish pleasures. Again, when it is sayd of Lazarus, that he receiued comfort, because he bore many miseries in the world, he should do very fondly, that should draw this to all men in misery, which haue receiued so little profit by afflictions, that they shall rather end in extreame punishment: but the bearing of the crosse is prayesed in Lazarus, which alwayes commeth of fayth, and of a sincere feare of God. For he which obstinately resisteth euils, and continueth as one vntamed in his wildnesse, deserueth not any prayse of patience, so that God should recompence any comfort to him for his affliction. The summe therefore tendeth to this purpose, they which patiently beare the burden of affliction layd vpon them, and doe not stubbornly striue against the yoke and scourges of God, but through continuall troubles shall aspire to the hope of a better life, for them there is a quiet ioy layd vpin heauen after the time of their warfare is expired: but on the other side, for prophane despisers of God which gorge themselves in the pleasures of the flesh, and doe choake vp all studie of godlines with a certaine surfeiting of the minde, tormentes are prepared presently after death for them, which may thake away their vaine delights: Further, it is to be remembered, that this comfort, which the children of God inioy, standeth in that, that beholding the crowne of glory prepared for them, they rest in a ioyfull waiting for the same. As againe the feeling of the iudgement to come, which they see reidie for them, tormenteth the wicked.

26. *Besides all this.* In these wordes is noted a perpetuall in the state of the life to come: as if it should haue beene sayd, the bondes, which distinguish the reprobate from the electe, can neuer bee broken. And so wee are warned to returne speedily into the way, while it is time, least we runne headlong into that deepe gulf, whence wee cannot rise. But this

is spoken vnproperly, that the passage is shut, if any man would descend from heauen to hell: for it is certain that such desire neuer cometh in any of the godly

27. *I pray thee therefore father.* That hee might the better apply the history to our vse, hee proposeth the desire of the rich man, that Lazarus might goe warne his brethren yet aliue. The Papists doe reason heere very fondly, while they would proue hence that the dead haue care of the liuing: then the which cauilt nothing is more absurde. For by the same colour I will gather that the soules of the faithfull not content with their estate, haue a desire to goe to hell, if the great space hindered them not. If no man receiueth this mad fancie, there is no cause why the Papists should please themselves very much in that other deuise. Neither is it yet my purpose contentiously to dispute this matter either this way or that way: but I thought to note by the way with what vaine arguments they are lead, to imagine the dead to be intercessors to God for vs. Nowe I returne to the simple and plaine meaning of this place: Christe vnder the persons of the rich man and Abraham, admonisheth vs, that where there is a certaine rule deliuered vs to liue by, not to waite and looke when the dead shoulde arise to teach and to warne vs. For Moses and the Prophetes, when they yet liued, were so perfect teachers to the men of their age, that out of their writings, the same fruite may come to the posterities. When it was Gods will to teach vs by this meanes to liue well, there is no cause why the dead shoulde bee sent to bee witnesses of the rewardes or of the punishmentes of the life to come. Neyther shall their negligence bee excused, which flatter themselves vnder this pretence: because they knowe not what is done out of this worlde. Wee knowe that this wicked speech, or rather hoggish grunting doeth passe amongst prophane men, that they are fooles, which vex themselves with a double care: because no messenger returned at any time from hell. Christe minding to take away such bewitchings of Sathan, calleth vs backe to the lawe and the Prophetes: according to that testimonie of Moses, Deut. 30. 12. *Thou shalt not say after this, who shall ascende into heauen? or who shall descend into the deepe? or, who shall passe ouer the sea?* The word is neere vnto thee, in thy mouth, and in thine heart. They therefore which doe deride as fables those things, which the scripture testifieth of the iudgment to come, shall in time to come feelee howe intollerable their wickednesse is, to discredite the holy Oracles of God. But Christe wakeneth his from this slouthfull disease, least they being deceived with hope to escape punishment, shoulde let escape the time of repentance. And to this tendeth Abrahams answer: because God had sufficiently and thoroughly deliuered to his people the doctrine of saluation by Moses and the Prophetes, there wanteth not any thing else, but that all men should rest in the same. The wisdom of man is altogether infected with the wicked disease of curiositie: so the greater parte alwayes gapeth after reuelations. Nowe, because that nothing more displeaseth God, then that men should so desirously wander beyond their boundes to seeke the truth of Magitians and Southsayers, and to seeke after feigned Oracles after the manner of the Gentiles, which is forbidden, for the staying of which ychling, hee also promiseth to giue vnto them Prophetes, of whome the people shoulde learne whatsoeuer shoulde bee profitable for their

their saluation, Deut. 18. 10. 18. If that the Prophets are sent to this ende, that God might keepe the people vnder the bridle of the worde. Hee which is not satisfied with this reason of doctrine, hath no desire to learne, but is moued with a wicked wantonnes: and therefore God complaineth that he is iniured when he alone is not heard from the liuing to the dead, Isa. 8. 19. This diuision which Abraham maketh of the word into the law and the Prophets, is referred to the time of the olde Testament. Now, when there is added a more full interpretation of the Gospell, if wee bee caried hither and thither with loathing of that doctrine, and briefly, if we suffer not our selues to be ruled by the word, our impietie is not to be borne with. Hereof it may be also gathered what assurance there is of Purgatory, and of such trifles of the Papistes, which hath no other ground but vpon dreames and visions.

30. *Nay, father Abraham.* This is Prosopopœia, as we haue said, which is rather set downe for the vnderstanding of them that liue, then for the care of the dead. For the doctrine of the law waxeth cold in the worlde, the prophecies lye not regarded, and no man abideth to heare God speake after his owne order. Some desire that Angels should descend from heauen, others that the dead should come out of their graues: others would haue whatsoeuer they heare sanctified with newe miracles, others would haue voyces speake out of the ayre. But if God should yeelde to all their preposterous desires, they would profit nothing thereby: for God setteth downe in his word whatsoeuer is profitable for vs to knowe, and the authoritie of this worde is testified and confirmed vnto vs by lawfull signes. Then faith dependeth not vpon miracles, nor vpon all sorts of miracles: but it is the peculiar gift of the spirit, and is grounded of the word of God. To conclude, it is the proper gift of God to draw vs vnto him, whose will it is to worke effectually by his word. Wherefore there is no hope that those meanes should profit vs, which do draw vs from the obedience of the word. I grant that flesh is not apter nor readier to any thing, then to hearken to vaine reuelations: and we see how they, which doe loath the scripture, do earnestly throw themselves into the snares of Sathan. Hereof sprang Necromancy and such like deceits, which the world doth not onely receiue with greedinesse: but also with a mad violence shee draweth the same vnto her. But Christ onely declareth heere, that they which are deafe & obstinate at the doctrine of the law, cannot be amended or brought to a better mind by the dead.

Mathew.

Marke

Luke. 16.

7. Who is it also of you that hauing a seruaunt, plowing or feeding cattell, would say vnto him by & by, when he were come from the field, Goe, and sitte downe at table?

8. And would not rather say to him, dresse wherewith I may suppe, and gird thy selfe, and serue me till I haue eaten and dronke, & afterward eat thou and drinke thou.

3. Doct.

9. Doth hee thanke that seruauant, because hee did that which was commaunded vnto him? I trow not.
10. So likewise yee, when yee haue done all those thinges, which are commaunded you, say, we are vnprofitable seruants: we haue done that which was our duty to doe.

The end of this parable is this, when as God challengeth all that wee haue to himselfe, as his owne proper right, and holdeth vs in bondage and seruice, whatsoeuer labour wee endeuour to employ in his seruice, yet he is not bound to vs by any desert: for sith wee are his, hee cannot owe vs any thing againe. Therefore hee proposeth the similitude of a seruauant, who, after hee hath passed ouer the whole day in diligent and painefull labour, returning home in the euening, continueth his labours vntill hee hath done his dutie according to the pleasure of his maister. But Christ doeth not speake of hyred seruants, which serue vs at this day, but of those olde bound menne, whose estate and condition of life was such, that they should get nothing for themselves, but should be giuen to their masters with all their labour, study, and endeuour euen vnto bloud. Christ teacheth that wee are bound and tyed to God with noe lesse bond of seruice: wherby he gathereth that he is no way bound vnto vs. And the argument is from the lesse to the greater. For if that mortall man hath such power graunted him ouer manne, so that he may driue them night and day to continuall obedience, and yet can craue no meanes of mutuall recompence, as if he should be his debter: how much more shall it be lawfull for God to require all the duties of our life, so farre as our power can reach, so that yet hee shall owe vs nothing at all? Therefore we see all them condemned of wicked arrogancy, which feigne themselves to deserue any thing at Gods handes, so that they should binde him to them: for there is no man, which would not willingly call God to accounte. Whereof the imagination of merites preuailed almost in all ages. But the saying of Christe is to bee noted, that we yeeld nothing to God of free will: for we are subiect to his power of this condition, that whatsoeuer is in vs, should be due to him. And there are two thinges to bee noted in this sentence, that our life, to the end of the race of the same, is wholly bounde to God: so that if any man should employ a parte of the same in the seruice of God, it is not lawfull for him to couenant to liue idly the rest of his time: as many after the seruice of tenne yeare would gladly bee set free. Then followeth that other, which we touched euen now, that God is bound by no works of ours to pay vs any rewarde. Therefore lette euery manne remember that hee is therefore created that hee should labour, and should exercise himselfe diligently in his office and calling: and that not for a certaine time, but to death itselfe, so that hee should no lesse die then liue to God. But in respect of the merite, that knot, which stayeth and hindreth many must bee loosed. For the scripture oft promising rewarde for workes, seemeth to attribute some merite to them. The answer is easie, that the rewarde not due as a debt, is not otherwise promised the of the meere good wil of god. For they are far deceiued, which do cople a rewarde with desert in mutuall relatio together: for God is moued to

Giue them rewardes not by the dignitie of their workes, but of his free mercy. I graunt that in the couenant of the law God is bound vnto men, if they perfectly perſourmed all that is required of them: but becauſe this band is voluntary, this remaineth ſure, that man can demaund nothing of God, as if hee had deſerued any thing. So therefore the arrogancy of the fleſhe filleth downe: for, if any manne ſhould fulfill the law, yet hee can beſtow nothing of God: becauſe hee onely rendreth that which hee was indebted. And in this ſence hee calleth vs vnprofitable ſeruants, becauſe that God receiueth of vs nothing more then due: but onely gathereth the due and lawfull fruits of his ſoueraigne Lordſhip. Therefore theſe two things are to bee noted, that God naturally oweth vs nothing, neither doe any of our workes deſerue or merite the worth of a hayre: Then by the couenant of the lawe, workes haue a rewarde promiſed not for the dignitie of the ſame, but that God might be a free debter. And this vnthankfulneſſe is not to be borne, if any manne ſhall vnder this pretence proudly liſt vp himſelfe. For the more liberally that God doeth deale with vs, ſo much the more he maketh vs bound vnto him: ſo that he is farre from giuing vs liberty to liſt vp our ſelues in a vaine confidence. As oft therefore as wee ſee or remember this word merite, let vs know that this is the abundance of the goodnes of God towards vs, that when he hath vs wholly in his debt, doth yet deſcend to make a couenant with vs. Wherefore the deuice of the Sophiſters is ſo much the more deſeſtable, which dare bee ſo bolde as to frame a meritt worthily deſeruing. Nowe, the worde meritt is of it ſelfe prophane, and ſtraunge from the rule of pietie: but this is farre worſe to make men drunke with a diuelliſh pride, as if they ſhould deſerue any thing of their worthines.

10. *We haue done that, which was our duty to doe.* That is, we haue brought nothing of our own, but we haue only done the workes due to the law. Chriſt ſpeaketh here of the perfect obſeruatiō of the lawe, which is not found any where: for he which is the perfeſteſt of all, is yet farre from the righteouſneſſe, which the law requireth. That queſtion then is not entreated here, whether wee bee iuſtified by workes, but whether the obſeruatiō of the law deſerueth any reward with God. This latter is denied: becauſe God hath vs bound to himſelfe, ſo that whatſoeuer can proceed from vs, he accounteth as his own by right. But though that were true, that the reward were due in reſpect of deſert to the obſeruatiō of the law: yet it ſhall not follow thereof, that any man ſhall be iuſtified by deſerts of workes: for we fall all, and our obedience is not onely maymed, but no part of it doth exactly anſwere to the iudgement of God.

Matth.

Mark.

Luke. 18.

1. *And he ſpake alſo a parable vnto them, to this end, that they ought alwayes to pray, and not to wax ſaine.*
2. *Saying, There was a iudge in a certaine cittie, which feared not God, neither reuerenced man.*
3. *And there was a widow in the cittie, which came vnto him, ſaying, doe me iuſtice againſt mine aduerſary.*

4. And he would not for a time: but afterward he said with himselfe, though I feare not God, nor reuerence man:
5. Yet because this widow troubleth me, I will doe her right, least at the last she make me weary.
6. And the Lord sayde, heare what the vnrighteous iudge sayth.
7. Now shall not God auenge his elect, which cry day and night vnto him, yea, though he suffer long for them?
8. I tell you hee will auenge them quickly: but when the Sonne of man commeth, shall hee find faith on the earth?

Wee know how rare and hard a vertue, diligence in prayer is: and in this our infidelitie bewrayeth it selfe, that except he grant our first requestes, presently together with our exercise wee cast away also our hope. But this is a notable tryall of our faith, if any man receiue not his desire, hee doe not yet distrust, nor yet cast away his hope. Wherefore Christ doeth not now without cause commend the perseverance in prayer to his disciples. Also, though hee vseth a hard similitude in shew, yet most apt, while hee teacheth his disciples earnestly to attend vpon God the father, vntill they obtayne at length as it were by force, that which otherwise hee seemeth not to giue willingly. Not that God being overcome with our prayers, doeth hardly yeelde to mercy: but because hee doeth not presently tell us indeede that hee giueth care to our prayers. And that Christ proposeth vnto vs a parable of a widow, which obtayned that which shee would of the vnrighteous and cruell Iudge, because shee ceased not to sollicite the cause dayly: the summe is this, God doeth not helpe his presently, because hee would bee called vpon with prayers. But though they, which pray vnto him are miserable and despised: yet if they faint not fro the continuall course of praying, hee will at length looke vpon them, so that hee will helpe their necessities. Hee compareth not equals together, for there is great difference betweene a wicked and a cruell man, and God, who bendeth himselfe to mercy. But Christ would teach the faithfull not to feare, least they should not by dayly prayer intreate the father of mercy, when as through their importunitie they compell men giuen to crueltie. The wicked and cruel iudge could not beare the suites of the widow: therefore how should the prayer of the faithfull be without fruite, so that they be continuall. Therefore if we waxe weary, if wee stay when wee haue prayed a while, or that our zeale to prayer waxeth colde, because God seemeth to bee deafe: yet let vs account that wee shall certainly receiue profit by it, though it doth not yet appeare. And with this perswasion let vs stricke with our impatience, so that a longer delay may not hinder the course of prayer.

7. Shall not God auenge his elect. That Iudge, which Christ describeth to vs to be altogether without mercy, as one which hadde not onely hardened himselfe in the sight of GOD: but having cast off all shame, hadde no care of his fame, opened his eyes at length to the miseries of the widow: it is not to bee doubted but that the faithfull shall seele at the least the

same commodity, so that they cease not to be instant with God. But it is to be noted, while Christ applyeth the similitude to his purpose, he maketh not God like to the wicked and unkinde iudge, but he noteth a farre diuerse cause, why he deferreth his faithfull ones, and delaieth them for a long season, and doeth not indeede reach his hand presently vnto them: to wit, because he is long suffering. Wherefore if God winketh at our iniuries longer then hee would, let vs know that he doth it of his fatherly wisdom, that he might exercise vs to patience: and a delaying of punishment for a time, is not a setting of sinnes free for euer. And that he promisetht that God will auenge quickly, ought to be referred to his prouidence: for, as we are too rash hattie, so he commeth not time enough to helpe, as our flesh imagineth. But if it were lawfull to enter into his counsell, wee should know that his helpe is ready at hand as neede requireth, & that it slacketh not the space of a moment, but is ready at all seasons. Yet it is deminded, how Christ should instruct his Disciples to pray for vengeance, who otherwhere teacheth his Disciples to blesse and to pray for their persecutours? I answer, Christ speaketh heere of vengeance, as he derogateth nothing from his doctrine. God sayth, that he will be the auenger of the faithfull, not that he would giue the raines at liberty to the affections of the flesh, but that hee might perswade them, that their saluation is deare and pretious vnto him: also by this meanes he biddeth them to trust in his defence. If without harre, and free and cleare from wicked desire of reuenge, they with a right ordred motion of the spirit crave the helpe of God, their prayer shall be holy and lawfull, and shall be heard of God himselte. But, because nothing is more hard then to cast off wicked affections, the Lord is to be required, that he would direct and gouerne our hearts by his spirit, that we may so conceiue pure and right praiers, so it shal come to passe, that we may rightly call vpon God the auenger, and hee beeing prayd vnto, will answer vs.

3. *When the soune of manne commeth.* Christe in this sentence declareth that it is no miruail if manne doe consume away in their euils: to wit, because they neglect the true remedie. But his will was to meete with an offence, which wee doe dayly conceaue of the vile confounding of all thinges. Vnsichfulnesse, crueltie, deceites, fraudes, violence, no regarde of equitie, shamelesse doe abounde euery where, the oppressed poore doe sigh, the innocents are proudly and despitefully vexed: yet GOD seemeth to sleepe in the meane season in heauen: heereof it commeth to passe, that flesh imagineth a blinde gouernement of fortune. But Christe heere declareth that men of iniustice are left destitute of the heauenly helpe, in confidence whereof they neither knowe nor will repose themselves. For it is not meete they should be holpe of GOD, which grudging inwardly, haue no regarde of his prouidence. But Christe doeth expressly foretell, that there shoulde bee vnbelieuers euery where from his ascention into heauen vnto his returne againe: by these wordes declaring that if the Redeemer shoulde not appeare so speedily, menne shoulde feeble the wante: because no manne almost woulde looke or haue regarde to him. And I woulde to God the effecte of this prophesie were not too euident: but experience teacheth, though the world should be

ouerwhelmed and oppressed with a great heape of euiles : yet there canne scarce bee founde a little sparke of sayth in a fewe . Others doe take the woorde sayth for integritie , but the former sence dooth better agree with the text.

Matth.	Mark.	Luke. 18.
		9. Hee spake this Parable vnto certaine, which trusted in themselves, that they were iust and despised others.
		10. Two men went vp into the Temple to pray: the one a Pharisee, the other a Publican.
		11. The Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himselfe, O God, I thanke thee that I am not as other men, extortioners, vnjust, adulterers, or as this Publican.
		12. I fast twise a weeke: I giue tyeth of all that euer I possesse.
		13. But the Publican standing a farre off, would not lift vp so much as his eyes to heauen, but smote his brest, saying, O God, be mercifull vnto mee a sinner.
		14. I tel you, this man departed to his house iustified, rather then the other: for every manne that exalteth himselfe, shall bee brought low, and he that humbleth himselfe, shall be exalted.

Christe nowe giueth commaundement of an other vertue, which is necessary in true prayer: that the saythfull come not into the presence of God, except they doe humbly and simply submitte themselves. There is not a more deadly disease then arrogancy, which yet is so thoroughly fastened and settled into the bones and marow of vs all, that it canne scarce bee driuen away and rooted out by any remedies. And it is wonder that menne are so deceiued, that they dare set vppe themselves agaynst God, and boast of their merits with him. For though ambition bewitcheth vs amongst menne, yet when wee come before God, it becommeth vs to forget all our vaine confidence: but euery manne thinketh that hee hath humbled himselfe sufficiently, if onely in hypocrisie hee hath prayed for forgiveness. Heereby wee learne how necessary this admonition of the Lord is. Furthermore, Christ reproveth two vices, which hee purposed to condemne, wicked trust in our selues, and pride in condemning our brethren, which do spring one of an other: for who soeuer deceiueth himselfe with vaine confidence, it cannot bee but that hee should lift vppe himselfe aboue the brethren: neither is it any meruaile: for how should it bee, that hee should not despise his equals, which in his pride listeth vp himselfe against God? And who soeuer is puffed vp with a trust of himselfe, purposely maketh battaile against God, who is reconciled to vs only by denying our selues, while we being, without all hope of our owne power, vertue and righteousness, doe repose our selues in his only mercy.

10. *Two menne.* Christe compareth two men together, which doe both pretend the exercise of religion in praying, yet they two seeme too much unlike. For the Pharisee hauing an outward holinesse, comming to God, commendeth his life, and commeth to offer the sacrifice of prayse, as it were in his owne right: But the Publican as a manne reiected, because hee knoweth himselfe vnworthy to come before God, doth insinuate himselfe fearefully, by confessing his owne vnworthinesse in his prayers: and Christe reiecting the Pharisee, sayth, that the prayers of the Publican were acceptable before God, Agayne, there are also noted two causes, why the Pharisee was reiected: to wit, because his trusting in his owne righteousnessse, extold him selfe with condemning others. Yet hee is not reprehended, because he lifted vp himselfe in the forces of free will: but because hee trusted that hee had reconciled God to him by the deserts of his workes. For this giuing of thanks, which he vseth, testifieth that he glorieth not in his owne strength, as if he should obtaine righteousnessse of him selfe, or shoulde deserue any thing by his owne industrie: but he rather ascribeth it to the grace of God, that hee is righteous. But though he giuing thanks to God, confesseth that what good workes soeuer he hath to be the meere benefit of God: yet because he putteth his trust in workes, and preferreth himselfe before others, he with his prayer is reiected: whereby wee gather, that menne are not rightly and perfectly humbled (though they account that they canne doe nothing of themselves) except they also distrust the merites of their workes, doe learne to place their saluation in the free goodnes of God, so that their whole trust and confidence be grounded there. A notable place: for to some it seemeth sufficient, if they take from man the glory of good workes, because they are the giftes of the holy Ghost, and so they interpret it, that wee are iustified freely: because God founde no righteousnessse in vs, but that which hee brought. But Christe goeth further, not onely assigninge the power of well doing to the grace of the spirite: but hee taketh from vs all trust in woorkes. For the pharisee is not therefore reprooued, because he challengeth that to himselfe, which was proper to God: but because hee trusteth in his owne merites, so that hee woulde haue God mercifull vnto him, because hee hadde so deserued it. Therefore let vs knowe, though any manne ascribe the prayse of good woorkes to God: yet if hee imagine the righteousnessse of them to be the cause of his saluation, or trusteth in the same, hee is condemned of peruerse arrogancy. And note, here is not reprooued the vaine ambition, wherein menne otherwise guiltie with themselves doe glory amongst menne, but the secrete hypocrisie: for it is not sayd that he was a setter forth of his owne prayse, but that he prayed freely with him selfe. But though hee set not forth the fame of his owne righteousnessse with a lowd voyce, yet the inward pride was abhominable to God.

His glorying was in two things: for, first hee freeeth himselfe from the common guiltines of men: then hee setteth forth his owne prayse. He sayeth that he is not as one of the common sorte, because hee is free from the sinnes, which raigne euery where in the world. And that he boasteth that he fasted twise euery weeke, and gaue tythes of all his goodes, is as much, as if hee shoulde haue sayd, that he performed more then the law required.

Euen as the Monkes in Poperie, doe preach the workes of supererogation: as though it were a small thing for them to fulfill the law of God. But though euery man for the measure of the vertues which God hath bestowed vpon him, is more bound to giue thanks to the authour, & this is a godly meditation to consider how much euery man hath receiued, least hee ouerwhelme the blessings of God in vnthankfulness, yet two things are to be obserued, least wee be lifted vp in any confidence, as if we had satisfied God: then, that we become not insolent with despising the brethren. The pharisee sinneth in both: for he falsely challenging a righteousness to himselfe, leaueth nothing to the mercy of God: then, he despiseth all others in respect of himselfe. And Christ would not haue reprobued this thanksgiuing, if it had not bene polluted with these two sinnes: but because the proude hypocrite winking at his owne sinnes, opposed the imagination of his sound and perfect righteousness before the iudgement of God, it was necessary that he should fall with his wicked and sacrilegious bouldnes. For the onely hope of the godly, so long as they labour vnder the infirmities of the flesh, is, when they acknowledge the good things they haue, to flee to the mercy of God, and to set their saluation in the obtaining of forgiveness. But it is demanded how hee should haue so great holiness, who was blinded with such wicked pride: for so great perfection cannot come any other way, but from the spirit of God, which wee are assured doth not raigne in hypocrites. I answer, he trusted onely in an outward shew, as if the secreete and inward uncleanness of the heart should not come to account. Wherefore, though he was full within of wicked concupiscences: yet he pretendeth an innocency, because hee carelessly iudgeth onely by the outward shew. The Lord reprobeth him not of vanitie, because hee falsely challengeth that to himselfe which he had not: yet it is to be noted, that no man is free from rapine, vnrighteousnes, lust, and other vices, except he be gouerned by the spirit of God. Hee vseth this worde Sabbath in this place, as oft times elsewhere, for a weeke: But God doth not commaund any where in the lawe, that his seruants should fast every weeke, wherefore this fasting and tenthes, were voluntary exercises without the prescript commaundement of the law.

13. *The Publican standing a farre off.* Christ deliuereth not here a generall rule, as if it should be necessary to looke to the ground as oft as we pray: but he onely noteth the signes of humilitie, which he commendeth to his disciples. Further, humilitie is placed in this, if they spare not their own sins, but by condemning themselves, they do prevent the iudgements of God: & they do simply confesse their owne guiltines, that they might be reconciled to god. And hether belongeth that shame, which is alwaies companion with repentance: for the Lord certainly doth especially stand vpon this, that the Publican earnestly acknowledging his owne misery & wretched estate, only fleeth to the mercy of God: for though he was a sinner, yet by obtaining free forgiveness, he hopeth that God wil become fauorable vnto him. In sum, if he might obtain fauor, he confesseth himselfe to be vnworthy of the same. And certainly, such forgiveness of sins doth only reconcile vs. to God: it is necessary that we should begin there, if we desire to haue our prayers acceptable to him. Further, hee which before confesseth himselfe guilty and contrite, yet desireth to be pardoned, banisheth himselfe from all confidence in works

and that was the purpose of Christ, to shew that God would not bee entreated of any, but of them which do fearefully flie to his onely mercy.

14. *This man departed iustified.* This is an improper comparison: for they were not both iustified, Christ onely preferreth the publican in some degree, but hee meaneth that he was acceptable to God, when as the Pharisee was altogether reiected. And this place doth teach vs euidently what this word to be iustified, doth properly signifie: namely, to stand before God as if wee were righteous. Neither was the Publican therefore said to be iustified, because he had sodainly gotten a new qualitie: but because his guiltinesse being pardonned, and his sins abolished, hee obtained fauour, whereof it followeth, that righteousness consisteth in forgiuenesse of sinnes. Therefore as wicked confidence defiled and polluted the vertues of the Pharisee, so that this life which was laudable before the worlde, was not accounted of with God: so the Publican not holpe with any merits or deserts of works, obtained righteousness only by praying for forgiuenesse: because that hee trusted not in any other thing, then the mercy of God. But it seemeth to absurde, that all men should be brought into order, sith there are Sainctes much holier then the Publican was. I answer, howe much fouer any man hath profited in the worship of God and true holinesse: yet, if he consider how much he wanteth of perfection, hee cannot otherwise pray rightly, except he begin at confession of his owne guiltines. For though some are more, some les, yet all are generally faulty. Wherefore it is not to be doubted but that Christ precribeth here a law to all men: as if he should haue said, then is God pleased with vs, when distrust in our works, we seeke to be reconciled freely by his grace. And the Papists are enforced in part to grant this: but presently they corrupt the doctrine with a wicked comment. They grant that all haue need of forgiuenesse, because no man is perfect: but first they make miserable menne drunken in a vaine hope of a partiall righteousness (as they call it) then they adde satisfactions, whereby they shoulde wipe away their guiltinesse. But this ought to bee the onely stay of our fayth, that wee are accepted of God, not that we, haue so deserued it, but because he imputeth not sinnes.

Matth.

Marke.

Luke 17.

11. And so it was, when he went to Ierusalem, that hee passed through the midst of Samaria & Galile. 12. And as he entred into a certaine towne, there met him ten men that were lepers, which stood a far off. 13. And they lift vp their voyces, and said: Iesus, maister, haue mercy on vs. 14. And when he saw them, hee said vnto them: Go shew your selues vnto the Priests. And it came to passe, as they went, they were cleansed. 15. Then one of them, when he saw that he was healed, turned backe, and with a loud voyce praised God. 16. And fell downe on his face at his feet, and gaue him thanks: and he was a Samaritan. 17. And Iesus answered, and saide: are there not tenne cleansed? but where are the nine? 18. There are none found that returned to giue God praise save this stranger.

19. And

19. And he sayde vnto him : Arise, goe thy way, thy faith hath made thee whole.
20. And when he was demanded of the Pharisees when the kingdome of God should come, he answered them, and sayd: the kingdome of God commeth not with obseruation
21. Neither shall men say : Loe here, or loe there : for beholde the kingdome of God is among you.

As Mathew before in the eight chapter, and the other two Euangelists declared that Christ healed one Leper, so Luke reporteth that the like miracle was shewed in healing of 10 Lepers. But there is an other purpose in this hystory : for here is described the vile and incredible vnthankfulness of the Iewish nation, least it should seeme a wonder to any man, that so many benefites of Christ were suppressed, and so many miracles buried. The circumstance is also added, which infameth their offence the more : for when the Lorde had healed nine Iewes, not one of them gaue thanks, but that their disease might be forgotten they escape away by stealth. One onely Samaritane professeth what hee oweth to Christ. Therefore of the one parte heere is shewed the diuine power of Christ. againe, the wickednes of the Iewes is reprov'd, whereby it came to passe, that almost no honour was giuen to so notable a miracle.

13. *Iesus, maister.* It appeareth that they all had some faith, because they do not only craue the ayd of Christ, but they giue him the title of maister. Also, it may bee gathered by their readie obedience, that they spake so from their heart and not fainedly. for although they yet saw the filthy scab vpon their flesh, yet assoone as they are commanded to shewe themselves to the priests, they obey without delay. Adde also: that they would neuer haue gone to the priests, but by the perswasion of faith : for it shoulde haue bene a scorne for them to offer themselves before the iudges of Leprosie to witnesse their cleansing, if the promise of Christ had not bene more forcible to them, then the present beholding of their disease. They cary the visible leprosie in their flesh, yet trusting in the onely word of Christ, they doubt not to profess themselves cleane, therefore it cannot be denied but $\text{\textcircled{h}}$ there was some seed of faith plated in their hearts. And though it is certaine that they were not regenerate by the spirit of adoption, yet there is no absurditie in it, that they helde some beginnings of pietie. So much the more it is to be feared, least it befall vnto vs, that the sparkes of faith shining in vs, be extinguished, for though the liuely faith neuer dieth, which hath his rootes fastned in the spirit of regeneration : yet we see other where, that many haue conceived a faith for a time, which doth presently vanish away. And this disease is too common, that necessitie enforceth vs, and that thereby our minds are caried to seeke God, yea, and the Lord himselfe by the secret instinct of his spirit solliciteth vs thereto : but after we haue obtained our desires, howe doth vnthankfull forgetfulness swallow vp that sense, & feeling of pietie? So want and hunger ingendereth faith, which fulnesse killeth.

14. *Go, shew your selues to the priests.* This answer is as much, as if hee should haue said that they were clenfed : for we know that the iudgment of the leprosie was in the law commanded to the priests, that they should discern the cleane from the vncleane : so Christe leaueth them their right without diminishing it, and

and he maketh them witnesses and allowers of his myracle. Therefore we sayd that these men esteemed holily and reuerently of Christ, which being yet diseased, of his onely word they presently shoulde conceiue hope of health. But the Papists doe very fondly gather their auricular confession from hence. The Leprous men are sent I grant by Christe to the Priests, not to vomite their sinnes in their eares: but they are rather sent to offer the sacrifice according to the commandement of the law. Neither, are they sent to purge themselves, as the Popish confession (by their saying) bringeth cleanness: but that they being now cleane before, should shew themselves to the priests. But they are double fooles, not considering what a filthy blot of infamie, they cast vpon their confession. They haue behaued themselves well, if of all the multitude of them which haue gone to the Priests, the tenth part onely returneth to Christ, and all the rest are wickedly alienated away. For they cannot pretend this as a title of their confession, but that it shall be lawfull to returne againe this fruit of the same vpon that none returned from the Priests to giue glory to God. But these trifles being let passe, we vnderstand to what end there was mention made of the Priests.

It came to passe as they went. Heere appeared the diuine poywer of Christe and of his wordes, and heere also was an instruction giuen, howe much obedience of faith shoulde please God: for heereof came their sodaine health, that they being of good hope, doubted not to take their iourney at Christ his commandement. If that that vanishing faith wanting a liuely roote, onely brought out the herbe, was yet adorned of God with a wonderfull effect. how much more excellent a rewarde remayneth for our faith, if it bee settled sincerely and perfectly in God. For though the health of the body profited not the 9. Lepers to saluation, but for their fleeting and frayle faith they onely obtained a temporall gift: yet vnder this figure it is shewed vs, how effectually a true faith shall be.

15. *Then one of them.* It is vncertaine whether he returned in the midst of the iourney, and Lukes words seeme to signifie the same: yet it seemeth more probable to me, that he came not to giue thanks vntill he had heard the iudgment of the Priestes. For it behoued him to be restored by the Priestes to the common societie, neither was it lawfull for neglecting the commandement of Christ to defraude the temple of God of the sacrifice: except that other coniecture shall rather like you, alsoone as he saw himselfe cleansed, before he desired the testimony of the Priestes, being caried with a holy and godly zeale came to the author, that he might begin his sacrifice at thankes giuing. But in Christs wordes there is an vpbraiding of the whole nation: for he doth odiously compare one stranger with many Iewes: because it was a common thing amongst them to deuour the benefits of God without any sense of godlines. And heereof it cometh to passe, that by so many and so notable miracles, Christe had almost no name amongst them. Yet let vs know that wee are generally condemned all by this complaint, except we become thankfull to God for his benefites.

19. *Thy faith hath saued thee.* Some interpreters doe restraints this worde *sauiug*, to the cleansing of the fleshe: but if it bee so, sith Christ commendeth the liuely faith in this Samaritane, it may be demaunded how the other nine were saued, for they had all generally like health. Thus therefore it

is to bee noted, that Christ heere iudged otherwise of the grace of God, then prophane men doe: namely, as a comfortable token and pledge of the loue of the father. The other nine Leapers were healed: but because they do wickedly blotte out the grace of God, their vnthankfulnesse hindereth and pollureth the health it selfe, so that they take not that profit by the same which they ought. Therefore onely sayth sanctifieth the giftes of God, that they may bee pure to vs, and being ioyned with a lawfull vse, they may bee to our saluation. To be short, Christ declareth by this worde how wee should vse the benefites of God rightly. Whereby we gather that the eternal saluation of the soule is ioyned together with this temporall gift. The Samaritane is saued by his sayth. How? Certainly not so that he was healed of his leprosie: (for this was cōmon with the rest) but because he is accepted into the number of the children of God, in that he receiued a token of a fatherly loue at his hand.

20. *And when he was demanded of the Pharisses*. This question vndoubtedly was moued in scorne. For when as Christ had spoken daily of the being of the kingdome of God at hand, and that there was no chaunge of the outward state amongst the Iewes; the wicked and malicious men thought this to be a plausible colour to vex and trouble him by. Therefore as if he should speake in vaine & trifle of the kingdome of God, they doe aske him iestingly, when at length the kingdom shall come. Yet if any shall thinke that they rather asked this question of grosse ignorance, then to scorne at; I do not strue against it

The kingdom of God commeth not. Christ in my iudgement neglecting those dogs, applyeth this answer to his disciples: as being after prouoked by the wicked, he tooke thereby occasion to teach them. And so their malice being laughed to scorne by the Lord, while the truth is defiled frō their cauls, it sheweth it selfe the more. Christ here useth this word obseruation for great glory: as if he should deny the kingdōe of God to come loftily, as in a pomp. For hee declareth that they are much deceived which seeke the kingdom of God, which is not carnall or earthly, with fleshly eies, when it is nothing else but an inward & spiritual renewing of the soule: for he teacheth them that they do peruersly against the nature of that kingdō, which looke about hither or thither, & they might obserue some visible notes: as it he should haue said, the restitution of the Church which God hath promised, must be sought inwardly: for he giuing to his electe a heauenly newnes of life, setteth vp his kingdom in them. And so he doth outwardly reprove the slouthfulnesse of the pharisses, because they aspire to nothing, but that which is earthly and transitory. Yet it is to bee noted that Christ onely spake of the beginnings of the kingdom of God, because that we begin now to be reformed by the spirit according to the image of God, that then a perfect renewing of vs and of the world, might follow in his time.

Matth. 13.	Marke 6.	Luke.
53. And it came to passe, that when Iesus had ended these Parables, he departed thence.	1. Afterwardes he departed thence, & came into his owne country, and his disciples followed him.	
54. And came into his owne countrey, and taught them in their	2. And when the Sabbath was come, he began to teach in the synagogue, & many	

their Synagogue, so that they were astonished, and said: whence cometh this wisdom & great workes vnto this man?

55. Is not this the Carpenters son? Is not his mother called Mary, & his brethren James and Iosue, and Simon and Iudas.

56. And are not his sisters all with vs? Whence then hath hee all these things?

57. And they were offended with him. Then Iesus saide to them: a Prophet is not without honour, saue in his owne country, & in his owne house. 58. And hee did not many great workes there, for their vnbeliefsake.

ny that heard him, were astonished, and said: frõ whence hath he these things? & what wisdom is this that is giuen vnto him; that euen such great workes are done by his hands.

3. Is not this the carpenter, Maries sonne, the brother of James and Iosue, and of Iuda and Simon? & are not his sisters here with vs? And they were offended in him.

4. Then Iesus sayde vnto them a Prophet is not without honour, but in his owne country, and among his owne kindred, and in his owne house.

5. And hee coulde there doe no great workes, saue that he layd his handes vpon a fewe sicke folke, and healed them.

6. And he meruailed at their vnbeliefe, and went about by the Townes on euery side, teaching.

53. When Iesus had ended. Matthew meaneth not that Christ came presently after the ende of those Sermons into his owne country: for by Marke it appeareth that there was some distance of time. But the meaning is, when he had taught sometime in Iudea, he returned againe to the Galileans, of whom he was receiued, but with small kindnes. Luke rehearseth almost the like history in the 4. chap. yet not the same. Neither is it any wonder that his country men were now offended at the beginnings of Christ, accounting his base house, his obscure and meane manner of bringing vp, so that they murmured against his doctrine: and they persisted after in the same malice, so that they ceased not to slander him, as oft as he would execute the office of a Prophet amongst them. Therefore this second reiecting of Christ declareth that the citizens of Nazareth were not amended by this time that he was away, but the same contempt was alwayes a lette vnto them from hearing Christ.

54. So that they were astonished. They are astonished, being mouued at the newnes of the matter, that Christ which had not bene brought vp in learning, but had bene occupied euen from his youth vnto his mans estate, in an handicraft, should be such a Doctor, and should utter diuine wisdom. When they ought to haue beholden the hand of God in this miracle, their vnthankfulness made them, that they spread darknesse vpon themselves. They are enforced to wonder, will they, nill they: yet they despise him. What is this else, then to cast away a Prophet taught of God, because he came not out of the schoole of men? And they overthrow themselves in their own confession, when as they giue so notable testimony to the doctrine of Christ, which findeth yet no place in the, because it hath not the vsuall originall from the earth. Why doe they not rather lift vpe their eyes into heauen, that they might learne, that that came from God, which excelleth mans reason? Furthermore, the miracles ioyned to the doctrine, ought to touch them deeper, or at least to waken them from sleeping in too much securitie, that they might giue the glory to GOD: for certain-

certainly, while God dealeth by vnwonted meanes, he doth so much the more evidently shew the power of his hand, yet this was the very cause why the Nazarites so maliciously drew a vaile over their eyes. Therefore we see that simple ignorance did not hurt the men: but they willingly tooke offences to themselves, least they should follow whether God calleth them. It behoueth vs rather to reason on the contrary parte, where humane meanes doe want, the power of god doth evidently shew it selfe, that he might haue the whole praise to himself.

55. *Is not this the carpenters sonne?* Wee know that it was by the wonderfull counsell of God, that Christ kept himselfe in a priuate life, vntill he was thirtie yeeres old. Hereof the Nazarites wickedly and vnwisly tooke an offence, when they ought rather reuerently to embrace him, as one sodainly false from heauē. They see God working in Christ: thereof of set purpose they turne their eyes to Ioseph and Mary, and al his kinsfolkes, whose estate was meane and base, to be as a vaile drawne betwene them and the manifest light. Wee haue sayd other where before, that all kinsfolkes are called brethren after the maner of the Hebrewes. Wherefore Heluidius imagined too fondly, that Mary had moe sonnes because there is mention made so oft of the brethren of Christ.

57. *A Prophet is not without honour.* I haue expounded this sentence more largely in the 4. chap. after Iohn. It may be this was a generall Prouerbe, that they which exceil in excellent giftes, are no where lesse esteemed, then in their owne country: wherein the vnthankfulness of these menne bewraicheth it selfe, which the more familiarly God offeth himselfe, so much the more boldly they refuse him in the gifts of his spirit: yet I do willingly subscribe to Chrysostome who thinketh that the Iewes were specially reprehended by this saying. But that which was wont to bee spoken against the whole nation, Christ doth properly apply to his country men the Galileans: for he was neuer lesse esteemed in any place, then where he was borne. Wherefore he reprobeth them worthily, that when they ought to haue bene the first that should haue embraced the grace offered them, they reiect it farre from them: for it is too absurd, that a Prophet of God should be despised in that place where he was borne, to whom others, as out of a strange place, doe come with great desire.

58. *Hee did not many great workes there.* Marke speaketh more Emphatically, that he could not doe any great worke there. Yet in the substance of the matter they agree very well: the way was shut vp against Christ by the wickednesse of his owne citizens, that he should not worke many miracles amongst them. He had giuen them some tast: they do willingly amase themselves, least they should vnderstand any thing. Therefore Augustine doth aptly compare faith to the open mouth of a vessel: but he sayth that infidelitie is like to a couer, wherewith the vessel is couered, least it should receiue the liquour poured in of God. And truly the matter is euen so: for whē the Lord seeth that we receiue not his power, at length he withdraweth the same: and yet in the meane while wee complaine that we want his helpe, which our incredulitie driueth and remoueth far from vs. Marke, by saying that Christ could not, amplifieth the offence of them from whom his goodness was staid: for certainly, the vnbelieuers do as much as in them lieth, hold backe the hand of God by their obstinacy, not that God is overcome as an inferiour, but because they permit him not to shew his power.

That

That yet is to bee noted which Marke addeth, that notwithstanding there were some sicke folke healed. For hereby we gather that the goodnes of Christ did strue with their malice, that it might goe beyond the hinderances. Wee doe finde the same in God dayly : for though that necessarily and iustly he with holdeth his power, because the way for him to vs is not open : yet we see that he maketh himselfe a way through places impassable, ceaseth not to do vs good. A wonderfull contention, that when we do by almeanes endeouour to ouerwhelm the grace of God, least it should come vnto vs, yet that, as conquerour, breaketh out, and as it were in despite of vs it becommeth effectuell.

Math. 14

1. At that time Herod the tetrarch heard of the fame of Iesus :
2. And said vnto his seruantes : This is Iohn Baptist : He is risen againe frō the dead and therefore great works are wrought by him.

Marke 6.

14. Then king Herode heard of him, (for his name was spread a broade,) and sayd : Iohn Baptist is risen againe from the dead, and therefore great works are wrought by him.
15. Other sayd, it is Elias : and some sayde, It is a Prophet, or as one of the Prophets.
16. So when Herod heard it, he said : It is Iohn whom I beheaded : he is risen from the dead.

Luke 9.

7. Nowe Herode the Tetrarche heard of all that was done by him and hee doubted, because that it was sayd of some, that Iohn was risen againe from the dead.
8. And of some, that Elias had appeared : & of some, that one of the old Prophets was risen againe.
9. Then Herod sayd : Iohn haue I beheaded. Who then is this, of whom I heare such thinges? and hee desired to see him.

The Euangelists do therefore report this, that we might know that the name of Christ was much spoken of euery where, so that ignorance might not excuse the Iewes. For otherwise this doubt might haue crept into the minds of many men: how should it come to passe, that Christ liuing vpon the earth, should rest quietly in Iudea, as if hee were thrust vp into a corner, and had reuealed his diuine power to none. Therefore the Euangelists do now witnesse that the fame of him was spread euery where, so that it came euen into Herodes court.

2. Hee sayd vnto his seruantes. It is gathered by the wordes of Luke, that Herod had nō this in mind of himselfe, but this suspition was thrust into him by the common rumour of the people. Neither doe I doubt but that the hatred of the Tyrant, and the detestation of the cruell slaughter should giue occasion of speeches, as it cōmonly cometh to passe. This superstition did sticke in the minds of men euery where, that the dead returned into life vnder an other person, as it is sayd other where. Now they take that which was next, that Herod by killing cruelly that holy man, obtained not that which he hoped for, because that he being raised frō the dead by the wonderfull power of God should become a more sharpe enemy, and auenger of his sinnes. Yet Marke and Luke doe declare that men spake diuersly : namely, that some thought him to be Elias, others, some one of the Prophetes, or which was equall to the Prophetes in excellencie of the spinte. Why they shoulde imagine it of Elias rather then of any other, we haue spoken other where. Because God had promised by Malachie 4. 5. that Elias shoulde come who should gather together the Church

Church dispersed, they fondly drevve the Prophecie to the person of the man : when as the simple comparifon should be in this meaning; least the comming of the Messiah should be obscure and hid, and least the grace of redemption should be kept vnknowne from the people, a certaine Elias shall goe before him, such a one as he was in times past, which restored the ruinous estates & ouerthrowne worship of God. Therefore he shall goe before in singular power of the spirit, that hee might make manifest that great day . The Iewes as they were grosse interpreters had drawne this to Elias the Thesbite, as if that he should execute the office of a Prophet againe. Yet others doe imagine that eyther some one of the olde Prophets was risen, or that hee should be some great man and excellent as they were: Also it is wonderfull, when they were of diuers opinions yet the truth came in none of their mindes. especially , when as the reckoning of the time it selfe should direct them to Christ. God had promised them a redeemer, which should bring helpe to the miserable and the lost. The extreame necessitie whereinto they were cast, did then especially require helpe of God. The Redeemer is present, as is partly witnessed by the crying of Iohn, and partly hee himselve testifieth of his owne office. They are inforced to acknowledg some diuine power in him, yet falling to their owne deuises, they change him into an other person. So truly the world, through wicked vnthankfulness vseth to extinguish the graces of God offered them. In respect of Herod himselve as I touched a little before, he conceiued the opinion that Iohn was raised, not with any ioy : but as euill consciences doe quake fearefully, and doe bend at every blast, so he easily conceiue that which he feared. And God often scourgeth the vngodly with these blind terrors: so though they harden themselves of purpose, neither are vexed by any other, yet they obtaine no rest from that inward slaughterman, but that he sharply scourgeth them.

Therefore great workes are wrought by him. It is wonder by what reason they were ledde to bring these thinges in . Iohn in all the course of his preaching, wrought no signe: therefore it seemeth to bee without all colour, that they seeing a man notable through miracles, should imagine him to be Iohn: but they thinke that these miracles were now wrought at the first, by them to proue his resurrection, and which should testifie that the holy Prophet of God was wickedly slaine by Herod: and now came forth as a man hallowed, not to be touched but with reuerence, least any durst be so bold as to violate him any more. Therefore to worke workes by him: that is, they thought them to be wrought that hee might get the more authoritie thereby, and that it might be euident that the Lord was with him.

Matthew 14.

3. For Herod had taken Iohn, and bound him, and put him in pryson for Herodias sake, his brother Philips wife.
4. For Iohn sayd vnto him: It is not lawfull for thee to haue her.

5. And

Marke 6.

17. For Herod himselve had sent forth and had taken Iohn, and bound him in pryson for Herodias sake, which was his brother Philips wife, because hee had married her.
18. For Iohn said vnto Herod: It is not lawfull for thee to haue thy brothers wife.
D d. 19. Thers-

Luke

5. And when he would haue put him to death, he feared the multitude because they counted him as a Prophet.

6. But when Herodes birth day was kept, the daughter of Herodias daunced before them, and pleased Herod.

7. Wherefore he promised with an oath, that he would giue her what soeuer shee would aske.

8. And she being before instructed of her mother said: Giue me here Iohn Baptists head in a platter. 9. And the king was sory: neuerthelesse, because of the oath, and she that sate with him at the table, he commaunded it to be giuen her.

10. And he sent & beheaded Iohn in the prison.

11. And his head was brought in a platter & giuen to the maid, and she brought it vnto her mother.

12. And his Disciples came, and tooke vp his body and buried it, and went and told Iesus.

19. Therefore Herodias had a quarrell against him, and would haue killed him, but she could not:

20. For Herod feared Iohn, knowing that he was a iust man, and an holy, and reuerenced him, and when he had heard him, he did many things, and heard him gladly.

21. But the time being conuenient, when Herod on his birth day made a banquet to his princes and captaines and chiefe estates of Galilee.

22. And the daughter of the same Herodias came in and daunced, and pleased Herode and them that sate at table together, the king sayd vnto the maid: Aske of me what thou wilt, & I will giue it thee.

23. And he sware vnto her: whatsoeuer thou shalt aske of mee, I will giue it thee, euen vnto the halfe of my kingdome.

24. So she went forth, and sayd to her mother, what shall I aske? And she sayd, Iohn Baptists head.

25. Then shee came in straightway with haste vnto the king, and asked: saying, I would that thou shouldest giue mee euen now in a charger, the head of Iohn Baptist.

26. Then the king was very sory: yet for his oathes sake, and for their sakes which sate at table with him, he would not refuse her.

27. And immediately the king sent the hangman, and gaue charge that his head should bee brought. So hee went and beheaded him in the prison.

28. And brought his head in a charger, and gaue it to the maide, and the maide gaue it to her mother. 29. And when his disciples heard it, they came and tooke vpe his body, and put it in a tombe.

The rehearfall of this history is nowe omitted by Luke, because hee had set downe the same in an other place. I also will be the shorter in this place least by writing one thing twise, I should be troublesome to the readers. The Euangelists do say, & Iohn was taken, because he had condēned openly the stealing of Herodias, & the incestuous mariag with her. Iosephus assigneth an other cause, namely, that Herod fearing some newe stirs against him, suspected Iohn, which may be, that the tyrāt vnder this pretēce wold haue excused his owne wickednes. **Or** that rumour was spread, as vniust violence & cruelty is full of many false accusations,

ons. But the Euangelists do declare the cause to be, that Herode was angry with the holy man, because he was reprov'd by him. Also Iosephus is deceiv'd, who thinketh that Herodias was not taken away from his brother Philip, but from his vncle Herode, the king of Chalcis. For at what time the Euangelists wrytte, the memory of this offence was not onely fresh & new, but was also apparant before the eyes of all men. And that Iosephus in another place sayth that Philip was of a milde disposition, I thinke it was a spur to make Herode the bolder, for that he might the freelier be reproachfull & iniurious against a quiet and soft manne, not apt to make warre. There is also another probable coniecture, that Herodias was rather given in mariage to her vncle Philippe, then to her great vncle her graundfathers brother being now a weake woine olde manne. But Herode Antipas, of whom mention is here made, and Philippe were not brethren of one mother, but the first was borne of Marthaca, the third wife of Herode the Greate, and the other was borne of Cleopatra. Now to returne to the Euangelistes: they say that Iohn was cast into bandes, because he had more freely reprov'd the wickednesse of Herode, then the cruelty of the Tyrant woulde beare. Now, the hainousnesse of the offence was odious and infamous enough of it selfe, that he did not onely fetch another mans wife from her lawfull bedde, and kept her at his owne house: but that hee did this iniury to his germane brother. When Iohn had freely reprov'd him, Herode feared not in vaine, least any sedition shoulde be rayled sodenly. Lust did not suffer him to amende his sinne: but hee promiseth him selfe a false and quiet liberty by casting the Prophet of God into bands. The ignorance of the history caused many to thrust in a vaine disputation, whether it were lawfull for me to take to wife, her which first was mari'd to my brother. For though naturall shame abhorreth from such a mariage, yet Iohn rather condemneth the taking of her away from her husband rather then the incest: because Herode by force or by deceit, had robbed his brother of his lawfull wife. And otherwise it was lesse lawfull for him to take his Neece, then the wife of his dead brother in her widow-hood. And it is not to be doubted but that so hainous an offence was spoken against euery where: but others reprov'd Herode with their euill speeches in his absence: onely Iohn commeth into his presence, and reproveth him freely to his face, if it might be that he might by any meanes be brought to repentance. Whereby we learne with what constant courage it becometh the children of God to be furnished, which haue to doe with Princes. For hypocrisie and seruile flattery reigneth almost in all Courtes, so the eares of Princes, accustomed to pleasant speeches, can abide no words, which shall more sharply reprove their sinnes. But because the sinne was so vile, the Prophet of God might not dissemble, Iohn commeth to him, though hee should neither haue reward nor thanks, yet least hee should neglect his duty, hee doubteth not to incur the displeasure of the Tyrant: especially, when hee knew that he being caught in the snares of a harlot, could scarce be remooued from his purpose.

5. When hee woulde haue put him to death. There seemeth to be some difference in Matthew and Markes wordes, in that the first sayeth that Herode was desirous of this cruell murder, but that hee was slayd for feare of the people: but the other chargeth only Herodias with this cruelty. But the answer is easy

that Herode would not in the beginning haue slaine the holy man, except some great perswasion had compelled him so to do: because he reuerenced him, and truly a reuerend feare staied him frō raging so cruelly against the Prophet of God: but Herodias by pricking him daily forward, caused him to shake off all feare of God from him. But when he was caried forth in rage by that fury, that he desired that the holy man were dead, yet was he stayd with a new let, because he feared the mouing of the people against him. And Markes words are here to be noted, Herodias (sayth he) laid waite for him: namely, because Herode was not so forward, or willing to the murder, she tried either to circumuēt him by synister deuices, or to worke some secret destruction vpon that holy mā. The first opinion pleaseth me best, that shee sought to entrap the minde of her husband by subtilties, but in vaine, so long as Herodes conscience withstood it, she could not destroy that holy man. Then followed an other feare, least any tumult should arise through the hainous crueltie of his death. But Marke toucheth only what stayd Herode, from giuing present place to the harlots request: for Herodias desired that Iohn hadde beene secretly put to death as soone as he was cast into prison. But Herod reuerenced the holy man, so that he would willingly haue obeyed his counsell. Also the feare here mentionned, was not a feare conceived of the estimation of an other, as wee feare thē which get some authoritie & credit, though wee esteeme them vnworthy the honour: but this feare was a willing reuerence, because Herode durst not dispise him, whom he was perswaded to be a holy man, and a faithfull minister of God. And this is worthy to be noted: for though Iohn had experience, that it was profitable for him many wayes to be in some credit with the Tetrarche, yet he feared not to displease him, when hee could not otherwise keepe his fauour, then by winking treacherously at his notorious & infamous wickednes. He might haue said that he regarded not his owne priuate comodities, neither had any other respect thē of the cōmon profit. For it is certaine that he sought nothing ambitiously, but Herode was obedient to him in holy counsels, which appertained to the lawfull administration of the kingdome. But because he saw that this kinde of recompence was not lawfull, that he might by betraying the truth, get some shewes & likings, he chuse th of a friend, rather to make him his enemy, then by flattery or silence to nourish the same which hee is enforced seuerely to reprehend. Iohn therfore by his example, prescribeth a certaine rule to godly teachers, that they should not dissemble nor winke at vices of Princes, though they should of that price buy their fauour profitable for the cōmon estate. But the spirit of god doth shew vnto vs in Herode as in a glasse, that it befalleth oft times, that they which worship not God syncerely, are yet ready in some poynt to obey his commaundements, so that they may haue some liberty graunted to them by release. But when they are more straightly dealt with, they become not only obstinate, but by casting off the yoke, also mad. There is therfore no cause, why they should please themselves, which yeelde obedience to many good counsels, vntill they haue learned to yeeld and submit themselves wholly to God.

6. *When Herodes birth day was kepte.* The Euangelistes doe nowe beginne to declare by what fraude Herodias brought the destruction of Iohn to passe at length, which shee hadde long time practised, and occasion was giuen.

giuen her by a solemne feast kept when Herod celebrated his birth day. For it can scarcely be, but that those great banquets, should besides luxury, pride, vnbrided mirth, and other wickednesses, also draw many other mischeifes with it. Not that it is euill of it selfe to make a rich banquet, but such is the readinesse of mans wit to wantonnes, that the raines being let loose, they do easily run out of course. That ancient custome cannot be disallowed for solemnizing a birth day euery yeere, for that day as oft as it cometh, admonisheth euery one of vs to giue thanks to God, by whom he was brought into this life, and hath now by his blessing passed ouer many yeares: then that he shoulde remember howe ill and vnprofitably hee hath suffered the time to perish, which was graunted of God: Lastly, that he should commend himselfe the rest of his life to the protection of the same God. But there is nothing so pure, which the worlde will not corrupt with her sinnes: for the most parte prophane with filthy corruptions the birth day, which ought to be holy: and almost no sumptuous banquet is free from dissolute wantonnes: first there is too much drunke: then is a doore opened to filthie and vnmodest speeches: lastly, no temperance is holden at all. This moued holy Iob (his sonnes banquetting together by course) to offer sacrifice, because that he thought that men could neuer moderate themselves so wel, when companions do inuite each other to be merry, but that office should grow many wayes. So it came to passe that Herode meaning to entertayne his guests sumptuously, suffered his wifes daughter to dace. Hereby it also appeareth what the discipline of that court was: for though many gaue themselves liberty then to dance, yet it was a vile note of whorish wantonnes for a damfell marriageable to dance. But filthy Herodias had so framed her daughter Salome after her own maners, least she should shame her. And what followed then? namely the vngodly slaughter of the godly Prophet: for the heat of wine in Herode so flamed, that he forgetting grauity & wisdom, promised that he would giue to a dauncing damsell euen to the one halfe of his kingdom. Truly a shamefull example, that a drunken king doth not only abide to look vpo with fauourable eyes so shamefull a shew of his house hold, but also promiseth so great a rewarde. Wherefore let vs learn carefully to resist the deuill, lest he intrap vs in such snares.

MAR. 24. *So shee went forth, and sayde to her mother.* It is no maruayle that Herodias should make so great account of the death of Iohn. That many doe coniecture that shee was kindled with desire of reuenge, is voyd of reason: for the feare of diuorcement rather troubled and vexed her: as for the most part where whoremasters begin to loath, they are ashamed of their owne lust. But shee hoped by this offence to haue Herod the more bound vnto her: if the couenant of the adulterous bedde were confirmed and sealed by the blood of the Prophet, as with a sacrifice. Therefore that shee might rule hereafter without care, shee would haue him put to death, whom shee found to be her alone enemy. Whereby wee are also taught, what miserable greife alwaye tormenteth an euill conscience. Iohn was kept in bandes: the imperious and cruell woman might haue forbidden all people from speaking with him, and coming to him, yet shee resteth not, but is vexed with care and feare, vntill the Prophet should bee made away. This also much auayleth to the shewing forth

of the efficacie of the word of God, that the voyce of the holy man, though shut vp in prison, doeth so vex the minde of the kings wife, as a most grieuous torment.

26. *The king was very sorie.* Religion was vanished out of his heart, as wee sayd: but because he foresaw how odious the crime would be, hee feareth the infamie and also the danger: heereof it commeth to passe that he repented him of his owne lightnes. Yet he dare not deny the dauncer, least he should be accounted inconstant, as though it were worle to retract that which he rashly and fondly promised, then to be constant in a most detestable offence. But because he will not in respect of the perfect vanitie of kings haue his word broken which he had giuen, he presently commaundeth that the Prophet should be slaine. And we gather that Herod supped that night in Macherontis tower, wherein Iosephus sayth that Iohn was imprisoned. And it is worth the labour to note, that the Evangelists doe say for his oath and the guests that were present: whereof we gather, if he had sworne a hundred times, no manne being present to witness it, yet he would not haue perfouraed his promise. Therefore religion of conscience bounde not Herode, but meere ambition caried him headlong because he accounted it no honestie for him not to performe the faith which he had giuen. So it commeth to passe, that wicked men neglect their dutie, because they haue no respect to God: but they are onely bent to this, that they bee not euill spoken of by men. Furthermore, if onely the religion of the oath had bene regarded of Herod, and not the shame of men, he yet sinned more greiuously in performing that which he had foolishly promised, then if hee had broken his oath. First, this was an vnaduised rashnesse in swearing, in that he confirmeth the promise of a doubtfull matter with an oath: then when it appeared that he could not bee set free from the faith which he had giuen, but that hee should plunge himselfe in a hainous offence, it was not lawfull for him to wrap vp the holy name in such an offence. For what is more against GOD, then that he should be the cheife in so vngodly a murder. If the question be mooued of his priuate losse and disrepute, let him which swore rashly, beare the punishment of his foolishnes. But this must be taken heede of, where any man hath taken the name of God in vaine, least by pretence of the same hee be abused to the committing of some offence, and so should commit double sacriledge. Heereof it followeth that Monkish vowes, to which, manifest wickednesse is adioyned, doe binde the conscience no more then magicall exorcismes: because God will not haue his sacred name forced to the confirmation of sinne. Yet this place doth teach vs to take heede that no man do vnaduisedly promise any thing: then that he ioyne not obstinacie to his lightnesse.

28. *And he gaue it to the maid.* This also increaseth the cruelty of the offence, & the holy mans head was after his death brought forth to bee scorned: but the Lord doth sometimes so submit his children to the pride of the wicked, vntill & he will shew at length that the blood of his children is pretious in his eyes. Herodias ioyeth that she hath obtained her desire, & cruelly triumpheth ouer her reprouer: but afterwards she being put fro her riches, & deprived not only of the honor of the kingdom, but also of her natie coutry, & of all helps, when she a poore woman painfully led a miserable life in banishment, shewed a ioyfull sight to the

the Angels, & to all good men. That the guesles are enforced to defile their eies with the beholding of that abhominable pompe, we do hereby learne, that they which sit at princes tables, are oft entrapped in many sins. For though no bloudy offence should defile the table, yet all things are so filled with al kind of wickednes, that whosoever do come thither, it behooueth them at the least to be giue to pranks of baudry. 29. His disciples came. This remained also to the cruelty of the woman, that the corpes of the holy man remained vnburiy, for it is probable by this, that his disciples performed this duty, that his body was thrown forth by the tyrants officers. And though the honour of burial profiteth not the dead, yet the Lord would that this ceremony shuld be reuerenced by vs, that it might be a witnes vnto vs of the last resurrection. Wherefore this endeouour was acceptable vnto God, that Iohns disciples should come & bury their maisters body. Further, this was a testimonye of their piety: for by this means they professed that the doctrine of the dead man yet liued & flourished in their hearts. Therefore this confession was prayse worthy, especially vyhé it was not without danger: because they could not honour this man slaine by the tormentor, but that they should prouoke the rage of the tyrant against them.

Matth. 14.

Mark 6.

Luke 9.

13. And when Iesus heard it, hee departed thence by ship into a desert place aparte. And when the multitude had heard it, they followed him a foot out of the cities. 14. And Iesus went forth, and saw a great multitude, & was moued with compassion towarde them, and hee healed their sicke. 15. And when euen was come, his disciples came to him, sayinge: This is a deserte place, and the houre is already past: let the multitude depart, that they may goe into the towns and buy them vitayles. 16. But Iesus sayd to them: they haue no need to goe away: giue yee to them to eate. 17. Then said they vnto him, we haue heere but

30. And the apostles gathered themselves together to Iesus, and told him all thinges, both what they had done, & what they had taught. 31. And he said vnto them: Come yee aparte into the wilderness, & rest a while: for ther were many comers & goers, & they had no leasure to eat. 32. So they went by ship out of the way, into a desert place. 33. But the people sawe them when they departed, and many knewe him, and raine a soore thither out of all cities, & came thither before them & assembled vnto him. 34. Then Iesus went out, & saw a great multitude, and had compassion on them, because they were like sheepe which hadde no shepherd: & he began to teach them many thinges. 35. And when the day was now far spent, his disciples came vnto him, saying: this is a desert place & now the day is farre passed. 36. Let them depart, that they may go into the villages & townes about, and buy them bread: for they haue nothing to eate. 37. But he answered and sayd vnto them: Giue ye them to eat. And they sayd

10. And when the apostles returned, they told him what great thinges they had don. Then he tooke the, & went aside into a solitary place, neare to the city called Bethsaida. 11. But when the people knewe it, they followed him. & he receiued them, & spake vnto them of the kingdom of God & healed the which had need to be healed. 12. And when the day began to wear away, the 13. came, & said vnto him: send the people away, that they may go into the townes & villages round about, and lodge & get meat: for we are heere in a desert place. 13. But he said vnto them: giue ye them to eate. And they said: we haue no more but five loaves and two fishes, except we should goe buy meat for all this people. 14. For they were aboue five thousand men. Then he

D d 4 sayd

but 5. loaves & 2. fishes.

18. And he said, bring them hither to me.

19. And he commaunded the multitude to sit downe on the grasse, and tooke the 5. loaves and the 2. fishes, and looked vp to heauen, & blessed, and brake, and gaue the loaves to his disciples, & the disciples to the multitude.

20. And they did all eate, & were sufficed, and they tooke vpp of the fragments that remained, 12. baskets full.

21. And they which had eaten, were about five thousand menne, beside women and little children.

saide vnto him: Shall we goe and buy two hundred peny woorth of bread, & giue them to eate?

38. Then hee sayd vnto them: How many loaves haue yee? goe and looke. And when they knewe it, they sayde: five, and two fishes.

39. So hee commaunded them, to make them all sit downe by companies vppon the greene grasse.

40. Then they sate downe by rowes, by hundredths, and by fifties.

41. And hee tooke the five loaves and the two fishes, and looked vp to heauen, and gaue thanks, and brake the loaves, and gaue them to his disciples to set before them, and the two fishes he deuided among them all.

42. So they did all eate & were satisfied.

43. And they tooke vp twelue baskets full of the fragments, and of the fishes.

44. And they that had eaten, were about five thousand men.

saide to his disciples, cause them to sit downe by fifties in a company.

15. And they did so, & caused all to sit downe.

16. Then he tooke the five loaves, and the two fishes, & looked vpp to heauen, and blessed the, and brake, and gaue to the disciples, to set before the people.

17. So they did all eate, and were satisfied: and there was taken vpp of that remained to the 12. baskets full of broken meate.

13. When Iesus heard it. Iohn reporting the same history, mentioneth not for what cause Iesus went ouer to the further shoar. Marke also & Luke do somewhat differ from Matthew: for they teach that the cause of this iourny was, that he might giue some rest to his disciples, after they were returned fro their ambassage. But there is no discord in that: because it may be, that he would haue his disciples aparte into a desert place, that there he might the better frame the to greater matters, & that at the same time a new occasion befall by the death of Iohn. For the death of Iohn might terrifie weak mindes, for that sorrowfull euent of that great Prophet, did nowe giue warning, what condition remained for them all. Certainly, as it is declared before, Iohn being taken, Christe went out of Herodes iurisdiction, that hee might turne away from the present fury: so it may be gathered, that Christ now withdrew his disciples being yet fearfull from the fire, and went into a desert place. Also it is vncertaine howe much time the Apostles spent in their first ambassage: for the course of tymes was either neglected by the Euangelistes, or not strictly obserued (as we haue sayd other where.) But it is rather probable to me, that they were not sent forth once onely to declare the message of the kingdome of Christ, but as occasion serued, they did either iterate the same in some places, or after some time they went forth into diuers places. Therefore I take that they were now gathered together, that hereafter they might be daily followers of him: as if it had beene said, they did not so goe from their maister, as if euery one had a continual ordinary office of teaching, but to preach for a time, the to returne to schoole againe, that they might profit better.

The multitude followed him. Though it was not knowne to Christe, (who knew all things before) what would come to passe, yet his will was as a man to provide for his disciples, that he might in deed declare, that hee had a care of them. And by that great concourse it appeareth, how famous his name was euery where, that the Iewes might be inexcusable, which through their owne slothfulnesse were deprived of the benefit of saluation offered them. And yet of this great multitude, which were enflamed with a sodaine heate to followe Christ, there was but a very small number, which gaue themselves to his doctrine truly and constantly, as it appeareth by Iohn.

14. *Hee was moued with compassion.* The other two doe expresse more plainly, and especially Marke, why Christe tooke this compassion: to wit, because hee saw hungry soules caried by their hot and zealous desire from their owne dwelling places into the desert. And that want of doctrine was a token of a miserable disposition: therefore Marke sayeth, that Christe hadde compassion on them, because they were as sheepe wanting shepheards, not that hee acknowledged them all for sheepe after the spirite of the God-head, but as hee was manne hee gaue iudgement of the present sight of them. For this was no small token of piety, to leaue their owne houses, and to come in flockes to the Prophet of God, though hee of set purpose auoyded out of their sight. Then it is good to note, that Christe was mindefull of that person, which hee sustayned: he hadde the office of a doctour layde vpon him: therefore hee ought for a time to account all the Iewes of the flocke and Church of God, vntill they shoulde estrange themselves. But this mercifull affection so preuayled in Christe, that being wearied with his disciples, and almost ouerwhelmed with continuall trouble, would not yet spare himselfe. Hee hadde sought some time of refreshing, and that not so much for himselfe as for his disciples: yet, because the necessitie of his office called him to a new labour: hee willingly leaueth that priuate respecte, and employeth himselfe in teaching the multitudes. And though hee hath now put off all those affections, which doe fall into a mortall man, yet it is no doubt but that he looketh downe from heauen vpon those miserable sheepe, which want a shepheard, so that they seeke remedy for their want. Marke sayeth that hee taught them many things: that is, that hee preached long, that they might cary away some sound profite. Luke sayeth, that he spake of the kingdome of God, which is the same in effect. Matthew maketh no mention but of the myracles: because that there was no oft weight in the to get Christ a name. But it is easily gathered, that he omitted not the doctrine, which was the chiefe.

15. *When euen was come.* Now the disciples were frustrate of their hope, nowe they see christe busied in teaching, also the people were so desirous to be taught, that they thought not of returning, therefore they admonish christe, that in regard of their bodies he should send them away into the next townes. And he purposely had deferred the myracle which he thought to worke vnto that time. First, that his disciples being stirred somewhat vpon the consideration of the same, might the better profit thereby: then, that the circumstance of the time it selfe shoulde teach, though hee preuent not their necessities, neither helpeth them at the first, that he yet doth neuer cast away the care of them, but hath alwayes helpe

ready in his hand, which he will bestow in the very moment.

16. *Giue yee to them to eate.* Because this myracle is fuller expounded in the 6. chapter of Iohn, least the repetition should be troublesome to the readers, I had rather it should be sought there: yet least nothing should be spoken here, I will briefly set downe the summe. Christ as yet had employed his labour to feed the soules, now he also extendeth his pastorly office euen to the care also of the bodies. Wherein he also confirmeth that saying of his, that to them that seeke the kingdom of God and the righteousness thereof, all other things shall then bee giuen, Matth. 6. 23. It is not to be hoped, that Christ will alwayes in this maner giue foode to them that want and be hungry: yet it is certaine that he will neuer suffer that his should want such things, as shoulde maintaine life, but that hee would reach his hand from heauen, when hee shall so see it meete for the helpe of their necessities. But they, which desire that Christe should nourish them, must also learne not to desire exquisite deinties, but to bee content with barley bread. That Christ comādweth the people to sit downe by companies, was first for this purpose, that they being so disposed into companies, the myracle might be the more euident: Then that the men might be the easilier nūbred, & when some should looke vpon others, they might themselues be witneses of this heauenly grace: Thirdly, because he saw the disciples so carefull, he would try their obedience by comāding them that, which seemed in shew to be as a iest. For it was wonder to what end christ hauing no cares, would make a shew of a banquet. To the same purpose also belong those things which followe: the loaves were giuen to the disciples, so that the wonderful plenty should grow betweene their hands, and so they should be the ministers of the diuine power of Christ. For, as if it were a small matter for them to be eye witnesses, Christ would that they should feele and handle his power. Two hundred peeces of money here spokē of by Budeus account, amounteth aboue the value of thirti foue French poundes. So they esteeme a little bread for euery man at a French soule. But when they had made account of so much bread, which shoulde suffice to feede the people but meanelly, their obedience deserueth no small prayse, while they simply obeying the commandement of Christe, doe commit the successe to his will and pleasure.

19. *Hee blessed.* Blessing is taken in this place, as it is oftentimes other where, for giuing of thanks. But Christ teacheth vs by his example, that wee cannot otherwise eate meates holily and purely, except wee doe shew our thankfulness to God, out of whose hand they come vnto vs. Therefore Paul saith, 1. Tim. 4. 5. Whatsoeuer meates God doth giue to vs, they are sanctified by the word of God and prayer. Wherin he declareth that those as beastly men (which neither account of the blessing of God faithfully, nor doe prayse the same in giuing of thanks) doe defile and pollute with the filthy pollutions of their owne infidelitie, whatsoeuer was by the owne nature pure: and againe, the meate which they do deuour, is polluted and defiled: Christ therefore prescribed to his a manner of eating, least they shoulde with wicked sacriledge prophane themselues and the benefites of GOD. The lifting vp of the eyes into heauen, doe declare an earnest and a vehement affection of prayers. Not that this gesture should be alwayes necessary when we do pray: but
because

because that the sonne of God would not neglect those ceremonies profitable for mans infirmities. Also the lifting vpp of our eyes is a fit spurre to stirre vp our sluggishnes, for that our mindes are too much bent downward to the earth.

20. They tooke vp of the fragments, that remained. When as the fragmētts which were left, after that so great a number of men were filled, were twelue times more then was set downe at the first, this gaue no small light to the miracle. For all men vnderstood thereby, that Christ by his power did not only create meates for them of nothing, which should suffice for the present vse, but if need should be, he could also provide for the necessitie to come. Lastly, the miracle, being wrought, Christ would that this should be gathered againe to be a notable testimony of the same, that they which were filled with meate should now at leisure behold the same. But though Christ doth not dayly multiply loaves, neyther feedeth men without their handy labour, or tyllage of the fieldes, yet the fruite of this history extendeth euen to vs. For our slothfulnes and vnthankfulness is the onely hinderance why we doe not see the abundance of corne, whereby we should liue, increased by the blessing of God dayly vpon vs. Also, that besides the refreshing & nourishing of vs there also remaineth seed for the ground of one yeares increase, euery one of vs should thinke with himselfe, that it is not without heavenly increase, if that the same wickednes hindred not, which blindeth as well the eyes of the minde, as of the flesh, least they should beholde the manifest worke of God. Also Christe declareth, that as all things are giuen of the father to him and into his hande, so the meates with which wee are fed doe flow and come to vs from his grace.

Mathevv 14.

Marke 6.

Luke

22. And straightway Iesus compelled his disciples to enter into a ship and to go ouer before him, while hee sent the multitude away.

23 And as soone as he had sent the multitude away, hee went vp into a mountain alone to pray: & when the euening was come, he was there alone

24 And the ship was now in the midst of the sea, and was tossed with waues: for it was a contrary wind.

25. And in the fourth watch of the night, Iesus went vnto them, walking on the sea.

26. And when his Disciples sawe him walking on the sea, they were troubled, saying, it is a spirit, & cryed out for feare.

27. But straightway Iesus spake vnto them, saying, be of good comfort, It is I, be not afraid:

28. Then

45. And straightway hee called his disciples to go into the ship and to goe before on the other side vnto Bethsaida, while hee sent away the people.

46. Then as soone as he had sent them away, hee departed into a mountaine to pray.

47. And when euen was come the shippe was in the midst of the sea, and he alone on the land.

48. And hee sawe them troubled in rowing (for the wind was contrary to them) and about the fourth watch of the night he came vpon them, walking vpon the sea, and would haue passed by them.

49. And when they sawe him walking vpon the sea, they supposed it had been a spirit, and cryed out:

50. For

28. Then Peter answered him, and sayde, Master, if it be thou bid me come vnto thee on the water.

29. And he sayd come, And when Peter was come downe out of the ship, he walked on the water, to goe to Iesus.

30. But when hee saw a mightie wind, hee was afraid: and as he began to sinke, he cryed, saying, maister, saue me.

31. So immediately Iesus stretched forth his hand, and caught him, and said, to him, O thou of little faith, wherfore didst thou doubt?

32. And as soone as they were come into the ship, the wind ceased.

33. Then they that were in the ship came and worshipped him, saying, of a truth thou art the sonne of God.

30. For they all saw him, and were sore afraid: but anon hee talked with them, and sayd vnto them, bee of good comfort: it is I, be not afrayd.

31. Then he went vp vnto them into the shippe, and the wind ceased, and they were sore amased in themselves beyond measure, and maruailed.

32. For they had not considered the matter of the leaues, because their hearts were hardened.

22. Iesus compeld his disciples. It behooued him to compell them, because to leaue him, they would not haue passed ouer to an other place, but against their willes. Also they doe herein declare how much they obey him, while against their owne minde, they giue place and obey his commandement. And certainly in shew it seemed very absurd, that he would remaine alone in a desert place, when night approached. Therefore their aptnes to be taught deserued so much the more praise, for that the authoritie of the heauenly maister was more regarded and esteemed by them, then that which might seeme probable on the contrary part. And wee doe not rightly and perfectly obey God, except wee doe simply follow whatsoeuer he commadeth, how much soeuer our sense repugne against the same. Certainly God alwayes hath the best reason and ground of his counsell and commandement, but he often hideth the same from vs, that we might learne not to bee selfewise, but wholly to depend vpon his will. Thus Christ compelde his disciples to passe ouer, that hee might frame them to that rule of obedience, which I spake of. Neyther is there any doubt, but that hee would make himselfe a way to the miracle which next followeth.

23. Hee went vp into a mountaine alone. It is likely that the sonne of GOD, from whom the tempest to come could not be hid, did not neglect in his praier the preferuation of his disciples: yet it is maruaile why hee doeth not rather preuent the perill, then apply himselfe to prayer. But that hee might fulfill the partes of a mediatur, hee sheweth himselfe to bee both God and manne, and gaue testimonies of both natures, as farre as the matter required. When he had all things at his owne will, hee shewed himselfe to bee a man by praying, neyther did hee that fainedly, but hee shewed a sincere affection of humane loue towards vs. In this matter the diuine maiestie withdrew it selfe after a sorte, which yet shewed it selfe at length in his order. But in going vp into the mountaine, he sought oportunitie, that he might the freclier pray farre from all noyse. Wee know how easily the ardent zeale in prayer, through the least disturban-

ees either falleth away, or else waxeth colde. And though Christe had not this imperfection, yet his will was: to teach vs by his example, diligently to vse all helpes, which may deliuer our mindes from all the snares of the world, that we being free, may bee wholly bent into heauen. And solitarinesse much auaiileth in this, that they which prepare themselves to prayer, shoulde be the more diligent, hauing God alone for witness, pouring out their heart into his bosome, they shoulde the more diligently examine themselves: lastly, considering with themselves that they haue to doe with God, let them lift vp themselves aboue themselves. Yet it is to be noted that he setteth not downe a lawe, as if it were not lawfull to pray any other where but in secrete. for Paule also commandeth vs to lift vp pure hands euery where, 1. Tim. 2. 8. And Christe himselfe sometime prayed before menne: and hee also taught his disciples, that they being gathered together, shoulde conceiue prayers openly amongst themselves. But that liberty of praying in all places hindereth not, but that they shoulde also vse priuate prayers in time conuenient.

23. *The ship was now in the midst of the sea.* The readers shal find this history expounded by me upon the sixt chapter of Iohn, & therefore I will be the shorter here. Christ suffered his disciples to be tossed with a troublesome tempest, and with some danger for a time, to that ende that they might with readier mindes receiue helpe when it shoulde bee brought them: for the contrary winde rose about midnight, or a little before. And then at the fourth watch Christ appeared, that is, three houres full before day: so their faith was as hardly shakē with terrours, as their armes were toyled with rowing. But when necessitie it selfe most vrged them to desire their maisters presence, they were two grosse and blockish to be feared at his sight, as if he had beene a spirit. For this cause Marke sayeth that their hearts were blinded, & vnderstood not the matter of the loaves. For by that myracle they were sufficiently taught, that Christe wanted not diuine powre to helpe his: & that he doth carefully prouide for them, when necessitie so requireth. Therefore their sluggishnes now is worthily condemned: because they do not presently call to mind that heauenly power, a notable token whereof being shewed but late, ought to be present before their eyes. But through the fault of their slugishnes they were afraid, because they had not profited by the former myracle so rightly as became them: but their blindnes is especially reprobued, because they had forgotten that, which they saw so late, or rather that they applied not their mindes to consider the Godhead, whereof the multiplying of the loaves was testimony euident enough. Yet Marke setteth downe two thinges in his wordes, that they considered not throughly the glory of Christ, which was shewed in multiplying the loaves: then hee declareth the cause, for that their hearts were hardned. And that seemeth to bee added not onely for the aggravating of the greatnes of the fault: but also to admonish vs of the infirmities of our minde, that we should aske new eyes of the Lorde. Certainly, it was, as I sayde euen now, too beauly ignorance not to vnderstande, as it were, the palpable power of God. Yet, because all mankind is sicke of the same disease, Marke doth of purpose make mention of the blindness, that wee might knowe that it is no newe matter, if menne cannot see into the manyfest works of God, until they be lightened from aboue: as Moses also said, Duet. 29. 4. Yet.

Yet the Lorde hath not giuen you an hearte to vnderstand . And though the woorde heart doeth often signifie the will or the seate of affections , yet heere in this place, as also in the place of Moses, which I cited, it is taken for the minde.

27. *Straight way Iesus spake vnto them.* Because Christe is not knowne to bee the deliuerer, while he offereth himselfe in deede, hee calleth his disciples by his worde to the knowledge of him. Also the comfort, which he exhorteth them vnto, is in his owne presence: as if he should haue said, After they vnderstand that hee is present with them, they haue assured cause to be of good comfort. But because that feare had possessed their mindes, hee reprooueth it, least it shoulde hinder him, and delay their comforte. Not that they could be ioyfull and comforted without all feare: but because it was necessary that the feare, which hadde preuailed should be appeased, least it shoulde ouerwhelme their comforte . And though the voyce of the Sonne of God is to the reprobate deadly, and his presence terrible , yet heere is described to vs farre contrary effectes of the same to the faithfull: to witte, that inward peace, and comfortable boldnes, obtaineth the victory in our hearts, least we should giue place to fleshly feares. But then blinde and inconsiderate tumults do trouble vs: because that we being vnthankfull and malicious, do not hold out the innumerable benefites of God, as bucklers, which being rightly considered, should be sufficient to stay vs vp. And though it was high time to haue helpe, when Christe appeared, yet the tēpest doth not presētly cease, vntill the disciples were better stirred, vppē both to desire, and also to hope for his grace. And that is to be noted, that he might know, that the Lord doth not without cause oft times defer that deliuerance, which he hath in his hand.

28. *Then Peter answered him.* The exception which he maketh declareth that his fayth was not yet ripe. *If it be thou (sayth he) command me to come.* But he had heard Christ speake: therefore why doeth he doubtingly and vncertainly thus wauer yet in himselfe? but in that so small and weake fayth there breaketh out a heate of inconsiderat zeale: for hee ought to haue mette himselfe by his owne measure, & rather to pray to Christ for encrease of fayth, that by the guiding & direction of the same, he might at length passe ouer seas and mountaines: but he now desireth rashly to flye without the wings of faith: & whereas the worde of Christ was not firmly nor rightly setled in his heart, hee desireth that the wauers should be firme vnder his feete. Yet it is not to bee doubted, but that this affectiō sprang of a good beginning: but, because it degenerateth into a corrupt extēmitie, it looeth the praise of goodnes . And of this it cometh to passe, that Peter presently tasteth the punishment of his rashnesse . Wherefore lette the faithfull be taught by this example to take heede of rash hastinesse . Whether soeuer the Lord calleth wee must runne diligently, but hee which passeth further shall feelee at length by his vnhappy successe, what it is to passe beyonde his owne boundes: Yet it may bee demaunded, why Christ shoulde graunt Peters requeste: For hee seemeth so to allow it. But the answer is readie, GOD for the most parte prouideth best for vs by denying those things, which wee desire: and sometimes hee graunteth our requestes, that hee may the better conuince vs by experience of our owne foolishnesse. So, when hee daily

grauē

granteth to his faithfull ones more then is meete, hee instructeth them in sobri-
etie, and modestie against the time to come. Furthermore, this was profitable
for Peter and the rest, and is also profitable for vs at this day. The power of
Christ shewed it selfe more evidently in the person of Peter, whē he tooke him
as a companion with him: then, if hee had walked a'one vpon the waters. Yet
Peter knoweth, and others doe plainly behold that he began to sinke, because
he rested not in a perfect faith, nor reposed himselfe in the word of G O D by
trusting the secret power of God, which did before make the waters strong: yet
Christ dealeth louingly with him, because he suffered him not altogether to be
swallowed vp. Both these things befall to vs. For as Peter aske one as hee was
afraid, began to sinke, so the fraile and vaine cogitations of the fleshe doe so
worke in vs, that we sinke in the midst of the course of our affaires, yet the Lord
pardoneth our infirmitie, and reacheth out his hande, least the waters shoulde
drowne vs altogether. It is also to be noted that Peter seeing that his rashnesse
had but euill and badde successe, committeth himselfe to the mercy of Christe,
Wherefore though we be worthily punished, it behoueth vs yet to flye to him,
that he hauing mercy vpon vs, may giue vs that helpe, whereof we are vnworthy

33. *O thou of little faith.* Christ doth louingly preferre Peter, yet so that hee
doth not nourish nor flatter his fault. This is the ende and purpose of this re-
profe, wherein the weakenesse of his faith is condemned: yet it is demanded
whether euery feare doth argue a want of faith: for so the words of Christ doe
seeme to note, there ought to bee no doubting where faith doth raigne. I an-
swere, Christ doth heer reprove a doubting, which was directly contrary to
faith. It may so be that a man may doubt without offence, as where the word
of God hath not yet made vs certaine and sure. But the estate of Peter was o-
therwise, who being instructed by the commandement of Christ, and now ha-
uing experience of his power, yet fell to a vaine & peruerse feare from that dou-
ble stay and strength he had.

33. *They that were in the ship.* I iudge that this was not onely spoken of the
disciples, but of the mariners and other passengers. They therefore which had
not yet professed to account him as a maister, do now sodainly confesse him to
be the sonne of God, in which word they giue him the honour of the Messiah.
For though that high mistery was not yet cōmonly known, how God should be
manifested in flesh: yet, because they had learned out of the Prophetes, that hee
which should be the redeemer, should be called the sonne of God, they which
set forth the glory of Christ, with this title, do declare that they beleue in that
Christ.

Mathevv. 14.

Marke 6.

Luke.

34. And when they were come
ouer, they came into the land of
Gennesaret. 35. And when
the men of that place knew him,
they sent out into all that coun-
try round aboute, and brought
vnto him all that were sicke.
36. And besought him that they
might touch

53. And they came ouer & went into
the land of Gennesaret, and arrined.
54. So when they were come out of the
ship, straightway they knew him:
55. And ran about through all that
region round about, and began to cary
hither and thither in beds al that were
sicke, where they heard that he was.
56. And

touched the hemme of his garment onely: and as many as touched it, were made whole.

36. And whither soeuer hee entred into townes, or cities, or villages, they laid their sick in their streets, & praid him that they might touch at least the edg of his garment. And as many as touched him were made whole.

24. They came into the land of Gennezareth. The Euangelists do meane that region, which was so called of the name of the lake: though it is vncertain whether the lake was so called, after the name of the land: but in that there is no matter of waight. It becoueth vs especially to bende our eies thither, whither the Euangelistes do leade vs, that the glory of Christ was shewed not by one or two miraclis, but that coast of Iudea was replenished with innumerable testimonies of his, the same whereof might easily spread to Ierusalem and into other cities euery way. Whereby we gather how vile and wicked the vnthankfulness of that nation was, which maliciously shut their eies at the present brightnes of the glory of God: nay, they endeououred as much as lay in them to extinguishe the same. But now it is our duty in this so great a heap of myracles, to learne to know to what end Christ came: namely, that he might shew himselfe a Phisition in healing all diseases. For it behooneth vs to call to remembraunce that, which Mathew alleaged before out of the Prophet Isaías, that he by healing the diseases of the body, figured, as in a shadow, some greater thing: to wit, that he should restore our soules to health, and that his peculyar office should be to take away spiritual diseases. And though at this day he is not conuerfaunt vpon the earth, yet it is certaine that now in heauen he excelleth in exercising the same graces, whereof hee then gaue a visible testimony. And because wee all are diseased with all kinde of diseases vntill he heale: let euery one of vs not onely offer himselfe vnto him, but let him also endeavour to bring others, which are in neede of the like remedy.

36. That they might touch the hemme. It is to be supposed that they were somewhat superstitious, when as they tied the grace of Christ to the touching of his garment: at least they defrauded him of part of his honor, when they hoped for no power by his simple word. But, least he should quench the smoaking flaxe, he applyeth himselfe to their simplicitie: yet here is no cause why they should flatter themselves, which seeke the grace of God in wood, or nayles, or garments, when as the scripture sayth expressly, that it is abominable to conceiue any thing of Christ, but according to the worthinesse of his spirituall and heavenly glory. Their infirmite was borne with for a time, which not knowing that Christ was God, desired to come neerer to him. Now, sith hee filleth heauen and earth with the fauour of his grace, it behooueth vs to apprehend by faith the saluation, which he offereth vs from heauen, and not with handes or eyes.

Math. 15

Marke 7.

Luke

1. Then came to Iesus the Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Ierusalem

1. Then gathered vnto him the Pharisees, and certaine of the Scribes, which

rusalem, saying.

2. Why do thy disciples transgresse the traditiō of the Elders? for they wash not their handes when they eate bread.

3. But he answered & said vnto them, why do yee also transgresse the commandements of God by your traditions?

4. For God hath comāded saying, Honour thy father & mother: & he that curseih father or mother, let him die the death.

5. But ye, say, whoſoeuer shall say to father or mother, by the gifte that is offered by mee, thou maiſt haue profit:

6. Though he honour not his father or his mother, shall bee free. Thus haue yee made the commaundement of God of no authority by your traditions.

7. O hypocrites, Esayas prophesied well of you, saying. 8. This people draweth neere vnto me with their mouth, and honoureth mee with their lippes: but their heart is farre from me.

9. But in vaine they worshipping mee, teaching for doctriens the precepts of men.

came from Ierusalem.

2. And when they sawe some of his Disciples eate meate with common handes (that is to say vnwashed) they complained.

3. (For the Pharisees and all the Iewes, except they wash their hands oft, eate not, holding the traditions of the Elders.

4. And when they come from the market, except they wash, they eate not: and many other things there be, which they haue taken. vpon them to obserue, as the washing of pots, and of brasen vessels, and of tables.)

5. Then asked him the Pharisees and Scribes why walke not thy disciples according to the tradition of the Elders, but eate meate with vnwashen handes?

6. Then he answered and said vnto the, Surely Esay hath prophesied well of you, hypocrites, as it is written, This people honoreth me with their lips, but their heart is far away from me. 7. But they worship me in vaine, teaching for doctriens the precepts of men.

8. For ye lay the commandementes of God apart, and obserue the tradition of men, as the washing of pots and cups, and many other such like thinges yee doe.

9. And he sayd vnto them, well, yee reiect the commaundement of God, that ye may obserue your owne tradition.

10. For Moses sayd, Honour thy father and thy mother: and whoſoeuer shall curse father or mother, let him die the death.

11. But yee say, If a man say to father or mother, Corban, that is, by the gift that is offered by mee, thou maiſt haue profit, hee shall bee free.

12. So ye suffer him no more to do any thing for his father or his mother:

13. Making the word of God of no authority, by your tradition, which yee haue ordayned: and doe many suchlike things.

1. Then came to Iesus. This is a place most worthy to be noted: because that heere is reprooued an offence no lesse daungerous then common. Wee see what frowardnesse there is in menne, both in the way and meanes of worshipping of GOD, for they doe dayly deuise newe kindes of worshipping, and the wiser any man would seeme to be, the more hee bendeth to shew

his wit that way. I speake not of strangers, but of them which are of the household of the church, whom God hath peculiarly enriched with this honour, that they should holde that as the rule of pietie, which he hath spoken with his own mouth. God hath prescribed in what maner we should worship him, and in his law he hath comprehended a perfe& holines. The most part as if it were a light and a vaine matter to obey God, and to obserue that which he hath commanded, doe of themselves gather out of sundry places many additions to the same. They which are in authoritie doe wrest their owne deuises to this end. as if they had somewhat in their heades perfecter then the word of God. Then crept in tyranny: for when men once take to themselves that liberty to command, they doe seuerely exact the obseruation of their owne lawes, and doe not abide that the least tittle of the same should be omitted either in contempt or els by negligence. Also though the world cannot abide the lawfull gouernement, and is most rebellious in bearing the Lords yoake, yet it doth easily & willingly yeeld to the snares of vaine traditions. yea, and many seeme to desire such a seruitude. But the worship of God is desired, which ought cheifly and principally to be obeyed, and the authoritie of men is preferred before his imperiall dignitie. And so the common people is hardly and tyrannously enforced to apply their whole indouour vpon trifles. But this place teacheth vs that all fained worshippings doe displease God: because that he alone would be heard, that hee might order and frame vs to true pietie after his owne pleasure: Then they loose their labour which as people not satisfied with the onely law of God, doe wearie themselves in obseruing the traditions of men. Thirdly, God is iniured when as the deuises of men are extold so high, that the maiestie of his law should fall away, or the reuerence of the same at least should waxe colde.

The Scribes and Pharisees, which were of Ierusalem. It is not declared for what purpose these Scribes came to Iesus: yet, to mee it seemeth probable, that they being moued with his fame, shoulde come with a desire to learne, for as much as hee seemed to be a fit master: though it may be that they were sent as spies. Howe soeuer the matter was, because they brought their owne selfe liking with them, the least offence might easily exasperate them to bite or gnaw at Christe. Whereby wee see howe harde it is for them to be drawne to sound doctrine, which are possessed with ambition and desire of raigne: especially they which are addicted to ceremonies which haue beene long accustomed, doe admit no newe thing, but doe obstinately condemne whatsoeuer is not accustomed. To be short, there cannot bee a people more Lordly nor more frowarde then these men were. Both the Euangelistes doe make mention both of the Scribes and of the Pharisees. Yet Matthew speaketh of them in the entrance into the hystory, and Marke placeth them after. But the meaning is all one: for they meane, that of other sectes the Scribes came, but the Pharisees were the cheife, as they which then were most honoured, and the gouernment then was in their hands. And it is no maruaile that they were soonest offended with the contempt of the lawes, which they themselves had made. For, as wee sayde before, when as they boasted themselves to bee the interpreters of the lawe, and therefore had their name giuen them, they had corrupted the puritie of the word with their owne deuises: and so
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what traditions soeuer the Iewes then hadde, came out of their shoppe: wherefore they became the hotter, and shewed themselues the sharper defenders of them.

2. *Why doe thy disciples.* When the controuersie is of mans traditions, this question is not of politike lawes, the vse and end whereof doe tende to another purpose, then to prescribe how God should be worshipped: but, because there is a diuersitie of mans traditions, there must be some distinction vsed. For there are some, which are manifest wicked, because they do institute wicked maner of worshippings, and such as are full contrary to the worde of God. Others, mixing the worship of God with prophane trifles, doe defile the puritie of the same. Others, which haue some more colour, not being infected with any notable fault, are yet for this cause condemned for that they are imagined to be necessary for the worship of God, and so God is not meereley obeyed, and the consciences are caught as in a snare. It is euident that the treatie here is of this latter sort. For the washing of hands, which the Pharisees vrged, could not of it selfe be condemned of wicked superstition: for else Christ would not haue suffered the water pots to haue been placed at the mariage, except the ceremonie had beene lawfull: but the fault was in this, that they thought that God could not bee otherwise rightly worshipped. That ceremonie of washing was not brought in at the first without some goodly pretence. We know how seuerely the law of God required outward cleane, not that the Lorde would haue his seruants to be stayd in the same, but that they should the more carefully take heede of all spirituall vncleannes. But the law held a meane in these washings, & then came these doctors vpon it, which thought not themselues wise enough, except they added somewhat to the word of God: & hereof came those washings, whereof there is no mention in the law. The lawgiuers themselues would not bragge that they had giuen any new law, but onely that they had added certaine cautions, which should be meanes and helps for the obseruing of the law of God. And presently corruption followed, whē as the ceremonies brought in by man beganne to be accounted as part of the worshipping of God: and also when there was a necessitie layd vpon free and voluntary actions. For, God (as it is saide before) would alwayes bee worshipped by the prescript rule of his own word: and therefore no addition to his lawe is tollerable. For as hee permitteth the faithfull to haue certaine outward rites, wherein they might exercise themselues to godlynesse: so he suffered them not to be mixed with his woorde, as if religion were in them. *They wash not their handes.* The cause of the offence is set forth more at large by Marke: but this is the summe, there were many customs amongst the Scribes, which they tooke vpon them to obserue of their owne will: those were secundary lawes inuented by curious heades, as if the onely commaundement of God were not sufficient. This pertained to cups, vessels, garments and other things pertaining to household, that they should not touch any vncleane or defiled thing. But to deuise new washings was a vaine and idle deuice. This was not without a colourable cleake, as Paul sayth Col. 2.23. The inventions of men haue a shew of wisdom: but if they had stayd themselues in the onely law of God, their modestie should haue beene more approoued, then their scrupulous doubtfulnes.

Their wil was to prouide that no vnclane person should rashly & without consideration eate meat : but it was sufficient for the Lorde to purge the apparant spots. Also these deuises had neither any end nor measure: for they could scarce moue a finger, but some newe blot would arise: but this corruption was much the worse, because it was cast as a religion vpon the consciences, that he should bee guilty of vnclannesse, which did not often with his body with water. It may be they would haue borne with the contempt of this ceremony in meane men. but, because they had conceiued a greater & more excellent estimation of Christ & his disciples, it seemeth to be an hainous offence, that the rites appointed by the Elders, which were religiously vsed by the Scribes, should not be obserued by the disciples of that maister, who professed a better matter, then the present estate deliuered. Also they are much deceiued, which do compare the sprinkling of their coniuired water, which the Papistes call holy water, with the Iewish washings. For the Papistes doe blot out as much as lyeth in them, that one Baptisme by the iterating of the same so oft. Then it is applyed to exorcismes, & that toyish sprinkling is supposed to be of force, to wash away sinnes. If that it were a thing lawfull of it selfe, and were free from such corruptions, yet that necessitie, which they vrge, is alwayes to be condemned.

3. *Why doe yee also transgresse the commandements of God?* Christe maketh heere a double answer: the first is to the person (as they say) the other containeth the definition of the matter and cause. The order is otherwise set downe in Marke, who first bringeth in that which Christe spake of the whole matter: then he addeth the reproofe, wherein he inueigheth against hypocrites: we will follow the course obserued by Matth. Againe, when as the Lord demaundeth of the Scribes, why they defile the law of God, through their owne traditions, he doth not yet plainly deliuer his disciples from the fault objected against them: but he onely sheweth them how wicked, preposterous and froward they were. They take it grieuously that the preceptes of menne are not exactly obserued: howe much more grieuous a matter is it, that the law of God being neglected, they should employ their whole endeuour in the obseruing of these traditions? Therefore it appeareth that they were moued rather with ambition, then with a true and right zeale, while they so preferre menne before God. Also it doth easily appeare by the text, in what sence hee sayeth that the commandements of God are transgressed. They did not openly, or protestedly abolish the law of God, as to affirme that: to be lawfull, which the law had forbidden: but they did indirectly transgresse the same, when as the exercises enioyned by the Lorde were suffered by them carelessly to bee omitted. The example which Christe bringeth is plaine and familiar, God hath commanded that children should honour their parents. Yet because the offerings made for the gaine of the priests, the gathering of them was so narrowly looked to, that they imagined that he sinned more grieuously that offered nothing, then he that robd his parents of the honor due to them. Also that which according to the law of God was left as a thing voluntary was of more importance in the iudgement of the Scribes, then one of the chiefe commandements of God. Therefore as oft as we are so bēt to keepe the lawes of men, so ſh we employ lesse diligence & care, for the keeping of the law of god, we are accōited to trāsgresse the same. A little after he saith ſ the cōmandemēt of god is made of no-authority, by the traditiōs of mē: because
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the Scribes doe hold the people so bound to their deuises, that there could no time or leasure be left to the word of God: also, because they thought, that they had done their dutie very well, that had waited of them at an ynnch, and hereof arose a libertie to sinne. For it is thought that the lawe of God may bee freely broken, sith that holinesse is rather put in the obseruation of other things then of it. Now, let euery man consider wth himselfe whether this fault aboundeth not more at this day amongst the Papistes, then in times past amongst the Iewes. The Pope with the whole dunghill of his cleargie denieth not but that GOD ought to be obeyed: but when they come to the purpose, where as they detest the tasting of a little flesh, as a deadly sinne, and theft and whoredome but as a veniall sinne, they ouerthrow the law of God for their owne traditions: and it is no way to be suffered, that the obseruation of mans deuises shoulde diminish any of that obedience, which is due to God alone. Further, the honour which God commandeth to yeelde to the parents, is extended to all the duties of godlines. The last clause that Christ addeth, that hee is worthy of death, which cunselth his father or his mother, tendeth to this, that wee shoulde knowe that the commandement of honoring the parents, is not small or of light importace sith that the breach of the same is so sharply punished. And this doth not a little amplifie the sinne of the Scribes, that so seuer a threatening terrifieth not the from letting the bridle loose to contemners of parents.

5. *But ye say.* This sentence wanteth that, which is more fully set downe in Marke, where it is added, *you suffer him no more to doe any thing for his father and mother.* And the meaning is that the Scribes doe wickedly in absolving them, which withdraw themselves from doing their duties to their parents, so that they supply that want with a voluntary sacrifice, which might haue bene omitted without any offence to God. Neyther may the words of Christ be so taken as if the Scribes should haue restrained men from all right obedience: but they did so earnestly apply themselves to get their pray, that children in the meane space did not their dutie to their parents.

7. *Esayas prophesied well of you.* Nowe the Lord proceedeth further. For hee speaketh of the cause it selfe, which hee denideth into two partes. The first is, that they being onely bent to outward rites, esteemed nothing of true holines, which consisteth in the sincere integritie of the heart: the other, that they peruerfely worshipped God, after their owne will. And though hee seemeth to reprove the men, when he speaketh against counterfeir and feigned holines, yet hee commendeth the summe of doctrin, which is fully defined thus. The worship of God is spirituall, and consisteth not in sprinkling of water, or in any other ceremony. Al o there is no other reasonable seruice of God, then that which is framed after his worde. And though Esayas prophesied not only of the time to come, but had respect to the men of his age, yet Christe sayeth that this prophesie belongeth to the Scribes and Pharisees: because they were like to those old hypocrites, with whom the Prophet had to doe. Christ reheareth it not after the word that is there set downe. yet the Prophet doth expressly mention these two faulter, wherewith the Iewes had prouoked the vengeance of God against themselves: that they faigned a holinesse onely with the lippes and outward profession: further, that they declined to faigned worshippings.

First therefore it is wicked hypocrisie, when men doe not honour God, but in outward shew for it were not euil of it self to draw neere to god with thy mouth & lips, so that the heart went before. This therefore is the sum, because the worship of god is spiritual, & nothing pleaseth him, except the inward sincerity of h^{is} hart be ioyned with it, they are hypocrits, which put holines in outward pomps

9. *They worship in vaine.* The Prophet speaketh word for word thus. *Their feare was taught by the precept of men.* But Christ doth faithfully and aptly yelde the sense thus, God is worshipped in vaine, where the will of men is thrust in for doctrine. Also by these words all voluntary religions, as Paul calleth them, Col. 2. 23. are evidently condemned. For, as we sayd, sith that God will bee worshipped after his owne will, onely he alloweth no new fashions of worshipping him to be imagined. Therefore when as man beginneth to wander out of the cōpasse of the word of God, the more earnestly & curiously he applyeth him selfe to worship him, the greater iudgment he pulleth downe vpon himselfe: because religion is profaned by such inuentiōs. The appositio consisteth in these words, *teaching doctrines the precepts of men.* For Christ affirmeth that they goe astray, which in place of doctrin do thrust in the cōmandemets of mē: or which worship god after y^e rule. Therefore when as man beginneth before God is better accepted then sacrifice, let this be holden as certaine, y^e all fained worshippings are vaine before him, yea, as the Prophet testifieth, they are accursed & detestable

Mathew 15.

Marke 7.

Luke 6

10. Then he called the multitude vnto him, and said to them, heare and vnderstand. 11. That which goeth into the mouth defileth not the man but that which commeth out of the mouth defileth the man. 12. Then came his disciples, & said to him, perceiuest thou not that the Pharisees are offended in hearing this saying? 13. But he answered & said, euery plant which mins heavenly father hath not planted, shall be rooted vp. 14. Let them alone: they be the blind leaders of the blind, and if the blind lead the blind, both shal fall into the ditch. 15. Then answered Peter & said to hⁱ, declare to vs this parable. 16. Then said Iesus, are ye yet without vnderstanding? 17. Perceiue ye not yet, that what soeuer entreth into the mouth, goeth into the belly, & is cast into the draught. 18. But those things which procede out of the mouth, come from the heart & they defile the man.

19. For out of the heart come euill thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications,

tions,

14. Then he called the whole multitude vnto him, & said vnto them, hearkē ye all to mee and vnderstand.

15. There is nothing without a man that can defile him, when it entreth into him but the things which proceed out of him are they which defile the man.

16. If any haue eares to heare, let him heare. 17. And when he came into an house away from the people, his disciples asked him concerning the parable.

18. And he said vnto them, what? are ye without vnderstanding also? Doe ye not knowe that what soeuer thing from without entreth into a man, cannot defile him, 19. Because it entreth not into his heart, but into the belly, and goeth into the draught, which is the purging of all meates?

20. Then hee sayd that which commeth out of man, that defileth man.

21. For from within, euen out of the heart of men proceed euill thoughts, adulteries, fornications and murders.

22. Theftes, couetousnes, wickednes, deceit, vncleannes, a wicked eye, backbiting, pride, foolishnes.

39. And he spake a parable vnto them

can the blind lead the blind shall they not both fall into the ditch

23. All

<p>uions, thefts, false testimonies, slanders. 20. These are the things, which defile the man: but to eate with vnwashed handes, defileth not the man.</p>	<p>23. All these euill things come from within, and defile a man.</p>
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10. He called the multitude vnto him. Here Christe turning him selfe to such as were willing to be taught, doth more at large expound that which hee had touched before, that the kingdom of God consisteth not in meate & drink, as Paul also teacheth. Ro. 14. 17. For when as outward things by nature are cleane, the vse of them is also free & cleane. Neither commeth the vncleannes of the good creatures of God. Therefore this is a generall iudgement, that vncleannes commeth not into man from without, but that the fountaine is hid in himselfe. But by Synecdoche hee saith, that out of the mouth of man commeth all those euils, which euery man bringeth forth of him. For he alludeth to the present matter, as if he should haue said, we do not draw in at our mouth vncleannes together with meat and drinke: but all kind of filthines floweth out from vs.

12. Perceiuest thou that the Pharisees. Because the Scribes were very froward & vnframeable, Christ bestowed not much labour in appeasing them, but had enough to do to reprove their hipocrisie & pride. So the offence which they had first conceived is doubled, where they see their washings not carelessly, but as it were professedly despised of Christ as trifles. Now, in that christ doubted not to set their malicious & poisoned mindes more on fire by pricking the so sharply, let vs learne by his exaple not greatly to regard whether our doings and sayings please all men: yet the disciples (as it is the maner of rude & vnlearned men) do gather by the hard successe, that Christ answered dangerously & ill. For to this purpose tended their admonitiō, that christ by correcting his ouer sharp speech, should endeuor to pacifie their offended minds. This is almost a thing common to the weake, to iudge euil of that doct in, which they see receiued with vnrighteous & enuious cares. And certainly it were to bee wished that the same might quietly & without offence haue the allowance of all men: but sith Sathan blindeth many mē's minds, & enflameth their hearts euē with madnes, and holdeth many soules ouerwhelmed with a beastly blockishnes, it cānot be that the true doctrine of saluation should fauor with all men: but especially it is no maruaile to see them exasperated, which nourish within them the poyson of malice and vntowardnesse. We must endeuour our selues so farre as lawfully we may, that no offence may arise of our maner of teaching. But it were a poynt of extreame madnes for vs to moderate as it were with great wisdom the doctrine which we are taught of the heavenly maister. But we see how of his speech wicked & lewde men tooke occasion of offence: yea, wee see how that shew of offence which was maliciously taken, was handled on eicher side.

13. Euery plant. Because that the weake minds were wounded with that the doctrine had no better successe, Christ would remedy that mischiefe. And he applyeth this remedy, there is no cause why good men should be troubled, or shuld the lesse honorably esteeme of the doctrine, though it light vpon many to their destructiō. This place is ignorantly expounded of some, that al the inuentions of men, & whatsoever proceedeth not out of the mouth of God, must bee rooted vp, and perish: For Christ hath respecte rather vnto menne, and the meaning is, that it is no meruaile if the doctrine of saluation become deadly to

the reprobate. For they are alwayes caried headlong to destruction, that are appointed to the same. Vnderstand therefore those that are planted with the hand of God, to be them, which by his free adoption are grafted into the tree of life: as Isaias also 60. 21. calleth the Church renewed by the grace of Christ, a graft planted by the Lord. Further, for that saluation commeth only of Gods election, it is necessary that the reprobate doe perish, by what meanes soeuer it bee dooſine: not that God will destroy the innocent, and them that are without fault, but because they of their owne malice doe turne to their own destruction whatsoeuer is offered them, though it be wholesome. So it commeth to passe, that the Gospell to them that willingly perish, is a sauour of death to death, as Paul witnesseth. 2. Cor. 2. 16. For though it be proposed vnto all men for saluation, yet it bringeth not forth this fruite but in the elect. Also it is the part of a faithfull and good teacher, so to temper whatsoeuer he bringeth forth, that it may profit all menne: but how oft soeuer it falleth out otherwise, let vs comfort our selues with this answer of Christe. And the similitude doeth notably expresse the cause of the destruction not to be in the doctrine, but in the reprobate, which haue no roote in God, hauing the doctrine set before them, doe vomit out their hidden poyson, that they might bring with hast that death vpon themselves, to the which they were before appointed. Note that Christ specially meaneth the hypocrits, which for a time seeme to bee planted as the good trees: for the Epicures, which are notorious for their grosse and infamous contempt of God, are not properly said to be like to trees: but they, in whom some vaine shew of godlinesse shineth. Such were the Scribes, which were a leſt in the Church of God, no otherwise then the Cedars in Libanon: so that their falling away might seeme the more absurd. Further, where Christe might haue sayde, that they doe worthily perish, which do vnworthily refuse their saluation, he goeth deeper, and denyeth that any manne can alwayes stand, except his saluation be established in Gods election. In which words he plainly sheweth that the first beginning of our saluation commeth of that grace, wherein God chose vs vnto himselfe for his children before we were created.

14. *Let them alone.* He sayeth that they are vnworthy, that there should any account behadde of them: therefore, that there is no cause why their offence should much moue vs. From hence was gathered that olde distinction of auoyding offences, which must be regarded, least offence be giuen to the weak: but, if any stubborne or malicious wicked person should take offence, that it is not to be regarded: for, if we would satisfy the ſhewardnes of all menne, it were necessary that Christ, who is the rocke of offence, should be buried. Therefore it is conuenient to know the difference betwene the weak, which being offended by ignorance, doe presently apply themselves to be cured, & the proud and forward which take offences, least the weak be troubled through our fault. But whereas the wicked will frowardly be troubled, let vs without regard go through the midst of offences. For he that spareth not the weak brethren, treadeth them as it were vnder his feete, to whome we are commaunded to reach our hand: but it were not conuenient to regard others, into whose offences it is necessary to fall, if wee desire to hold a right course. Further, where vnderpretence of offence it commeth to passe to those men to bee alienated, and to fall away from Christ, they must be let alone, least they draw vs away with them. *They*

They are blinde leaders of the blinde. Christ declareth that they shall miserably perish, whoſoever will bend theſelues hither and thither after their pleaſure: for when they will ſtumble in the plaine way, it doth hereby appeare that they are willingly blinde. Now, to what purpoſe ſhould any man ſuffer himſelfe to be governed by theſe, except that he would fall into the ſame pit. And Chriſt, which ſunne of righteouſnes ſhineth to vs, by the light of the Goſpel not only ſheweth vs the way, but will haue the ſame preferred of vs, not without cauſe calleth his diſciples backe from that ſlouthfulnes, leaſt for the fauour of blinde men, they ſhould wander as it were in darkeneſſe. Hereof we doe alſo gather that they all are inexcusable, which vnder pretence of ſimplicitie or modeſtie doe deliuer themſelues to be deceiued and to be ſnared in errors. Luke in rehearſing this ſentence, noteth no circumſtance, but generally ſayth that Chriſt vſed this ſimilitude, as he mentioning many ſayings of Chriſt, ſheweth not to what purpoſe they were ſpoke. And it might alſo haue bene, that Chriſt ſpake this ſame thing oftner. yet I thought good to ſet it down in this place, becauſe that other wher there is not an apter place, & Lu. declareth not the time whe it was ſpoke.

15. *Peter answereth.* Becauſe the diſciples doe bewray ouermuch rudenes, Chriſt doeth correct and reprove them, and worthily: for that they were as yet without vnderſtanding, yet hee ceaſeth not to be their teacher. That which Matthew by name doth attribute to Peter, Marke reporteth that it was in the ſame ſence demanded of all of them, & that is euident by the answer of Chriſt, where not only the ignorance of Peter, but of them all together is reprooued. And the ſumme of it is, that men are not filled with meates, but they haue the filthineſſe of finnes ſhut vp within them, which doe openly breake ſoorth into deedes and workes. If any man do obiekt the intemperancie of feeding to be an vncleanneſſe, it is eaſily answered: for Chriſte ſpake not but of the naturie and lawfull vſe of thoſe thinges which God hath made ſubiect vnto vs. To eate and to drinke, is of it ſelfe a thing free and indifferent: if any corruption falleth out in the ſame, it ſpringeth from man himſelfe, and ought therefore to be accounted as an inward thing, and not an outward.

19. *For out of the heart come euill thoughtes.* Hereby wee gather that which I gaue warning of before, that the woorde *mouth*, was fiſt vſed here of Chriſte, by reaſon of the circumſtance of the preſent place, but now there is no mention of the mouth: but it is only ſaid, that from the heart of man proceedeth whatſoever is vncleane, and it doth deſile with the filthines of the ſame. Marke diſtincteth in this from Matthew, in that he reckoneth vppon many finnes, as euill thoughtes, wicked deſires, which ſome tranſlate couetouſneſſe, I had rather take the ſame generally. In like manner deceite and intemperancie, and thoſe which doe thereafter followe: but though the manner of ſpeech is improper, it is ſufficient to holde the meaning of Chriſt, that all vices doe proceed out of the euill and corrupt affections of the heart. It is vnproperly ſayd, that the euill eye proceedeth of the heart, yet in the matter it ſelfe, there is nothing that is either abſurde or doubtfull: for that the vncleane heart deſileth the eyes, ſo as they become the ſeruantes or instruments of euill luſts. Neither yet doth Chriſte reſtraine euery thing that is euill in manne to manifeſt finnes: but that hee might more euidently ſhewe the heart of manne to be the ſeat of all euilles,

he sayeth that the testimonies and fruits are apparant in the sinnes themselves. For the word *Defiling or making vncleane*, in Greeke is said to make *Common*: as a little before Marke sayd *common hands*, for vncleane. And it is an Hebrew phrase: for because the Lord had separated the Iewes on this condition, that they might be seuered from all the vncleannes of the Gentiles, what fouer differed from this holinesse, they called *common* or as prophane.

Matth. 15.

21. And Iesus went thence, & departed into the coastes of Tyrus and Sidon.

22. And beholde, a woman a Canaanite, came out of the same coastes, & cried, saying vnto him, haue mercy on me, O Lorde, the sonne of Dauid: my daughter is miserably vexed with a deuill. 23. But he answered her not a worde. Then came to him his disciples, and besought him saying: send her away, for shee cryeth after vs. 24. But he answered and sayd, I am not sent, but vnto the lost sheepe of the house of Israel.

25. Yet shee came and worshipped him, saying: Lord helpe me.

26. And he answered and said: It is not good to take the childrens bread and to cast it to whelpes.

27. But she said: truth Lord: yet in deed the whelpes eat of the crumbs, which fall from their masters table.

28. The Iesus answered & said vnto her: O womā great is thy faith: be it to thee, as thou desirest: and her daughter was made whole at that houre.

Marke 7.

24. And from thence hee arose, and went into the borders of Tyrus and Sydon, and entred into an house, and would that no man should haue knowne, but hee coulde not be hid. 25 For a certaine womā, whose little daughter hadde an vn-cleane spirit, heard of him, & came and fell at his feete.

26. (And the womā was a Greeke, a Syrophenissian by nation) and she besought him that he would cast out the deuill out of her daughter.

27. But Iesus sayde vnto her: let the children firste bee fedde: for it is not good to take the childrens bread and to cast it vnto whelpes.

28. Then she answered, and sayd vnto him: truneth Lorde: yet in deepe the whelpes eate vnder the table, of the childrens crummes.

29. Then hee sayd vnto her: for this saying, goe thy way: the deuill is gone out of thy daughter.

30. And when she was come home to her house, shee founde the deuill departed and her daughter lying on the bed.

Luke.

In this myracle we are taught how the grace of christ begā to spread amongst the Gentiles. For though the full time was not yet come, wherein Christ shuld make himselfe known to the whole world, yet it pleased him to giue some tastes of his common mercy, which at length was bee itowed generally both to the Iewes and Gentiles after his resurrection. Also in the woman of Canaan is described a notable image of faith, that by making cōparison, we might know that the promised redemption was worthily taken from the Iewes, whose vngodlinesse was so blockish. The woman which Matthew calleth a canaanite, is of Marke sayde to haue beene a Grecian, and by nation a Syrophenissian, wherein there is no difference: for we know that it was the common maner of speech amongst the Iewes, to call al forraine nations Grecians: and therefore that

Anti.

Antithesis betweene the Grecians and the Iewes is often found in Paul. Also when shee was borne in the coasts of Tyre and Sydon, it is no maruaile that she is called a Syrophœniscian: when as the region had the name of Syria, and was apart of Phœnicia, and the Iewes very odiously called all the inhabitantes of that land Cananites. And it is to be supposed that the most part of them came of the people of Canaan, who being banished out of their countrie, tooke the next place of refuge in their banishment. They doe both agree in this that the woman came of a proper hūe nation, not brought vp in the doctrine of the lawe, that shee came of her owne accord to Christ in all humilitie to seeke aid of him. The circumstance is also to be noted, which is set downe by Marke, that Christ came not thither with banner disployed, but as a private man, that he might hide himselfe in that corner for a time. But Marke speaketh after the common sense of flesh, for though Christ foresaw by his diuine spirit what should come to passe yet in as much as he was the seruant and ambassadour of the father, hee kept himselfe after the maner of man within the bounds of the calling laid vpon him: therefore it is sayd that hee could not doe that, which as a man hee would haue done. In the meane while this circumstance hath great waight for the condemnation of the Iewes, that when Christ in open place did sit before them the promised redemption with a loud voice and miracles annexed to the same, they remained blinde and deafe, when yet they boasted themselves to bee heires of the covenant of the Lord, his peculiar people, and a priestly kingdome: & this woman which had none of these priuiledges with the children of Abrahā, vnto whom the covenant in shew appertayned not, not being called either with word or signe, cometh running of her owne free will.

22. *Haue mercy on me, O Lord.* Though this woman was a stranger from the Lords flock, yet she had gotten some tast of godlines: for without some knowledge of the promises, shee could not haue called Christ the sonne of Dauid. For although the Iewes were almost false away from the pure and sincere doctrine of the law, or at the least were turned farre aside from the same, yet the renowned fame of the promised redemption flourished. And when as the restitution of the church rested vpon the kingdome of Dauid, when as there was any speach of the Messias, the name of the sonne of Dauid was common among them, and this confession was in the mouth of all men. But when as true faith was worne out amongst them by the wonderfull & incredible goodnes of God it came to passe that the fauour of the promises came to the nations that dwelt by them. Therefore, though this woman had not become familiarly taught by any maister, neither yet had framed a faith in Christ vnadvisedly to herselfe, but shee conceived it out of the law and the Prophets. Wherefore that dog Seruetus no lesse foolishly then wickedly abuted this example, that hee might strip faith bare and naked of the promises. After this sense, I deny not but that sometimes there may be a faith conceived, which alwayes hath not an expresse & distinct knowledge of sound doctrine: so that we hold this, that faith doth alwaies spring out of the word of God, & hath his beginning of the true principles, so that it may alwayes be annexed to some light of true knowledge.

33. *But hee answered her not.* The Euangelistes doe diuers waies commend the faith of this womanne, as now of her inuincible constancie. For when the silence of Christe was a kinde of repulse, it is maruaile that shee

was not ouerthrowne with this temptation : but her diligence in praying , was a witnesse of her perseuerāce. Yet this seemeth to be contrary to the nature of faith and inuocation, as Paul doth describe it to the Romanes, chap. 10. 14. namely that no man can pray rightly, except he haue heard the word of God before. Who therefore will say that this womanne is indewed with faith, who when Christ held his peace, of her own motiō, breatheth forth her hope? But when as Christ speaketh and holdeth his peace two wayes, it is to be noted though hee then suppressed the words of his mouth, yet he spake inwardly in the minde of the woman : and so this inward instinct was vnto her in steade of outward preaching. Note also, that when her prayer arose of the hearing of faith, though Christ doeth not presently answer, yet the doctrine which shee once learned, doth alwayes resound in her, that Christ the Redeemer should come. So the Lord often speaketh to his faithfull ones, and withall holdeth his peace for they trusting to the testimonies of the Scripture, where they heare him speaking, they doubt not but that he will be mercifull vnto them : and yet he doth not presently answer to their requests and petitions : but rather dissembleth his hearing of them. Therefore we see what the purpose of Christ was in holding his peace, not that hee would quench the faith of the woman, but rather that hee might sharpen her indeuour, and kindle her seruencie. If that so little seede of doctrine brought forth so greate fruite in this womā of Canaan, nothing is more vnseemely, then that wee should fall away, if at any time he hold vs in suspense, and doth not yeelde vs presently a kinde answer.

Send her away. The disciples doe aske nothing in her fauour : but because her importunity is troublesome vnto them, they desire that shee may bee sent away by any meanes. But it was a very childish deuice, that the Papists vnder this pretence inducoured to bring in the Saintes that are dead to be our patrons for if wee should grant that this woman intreated the disciples eyther to speake for her, or to fauour her (which yet cannot bee gathered of the text) yet there is an other reason or state of them that are dead, & of them that are alieue. Note further, that the disciples doe heare her disdainfully : and if they had the mind to helpe her with their patronage, yet they obtaine nothing.

24 I am not sent. Hee rendreth a reason vnto his Apostles, why hee heareth not the Cananite, because hee woulde imploy himselfe wholly vpon the Iewes, to whom onely hee was sent a minister of the grace of God. Therefore of his calling and commandment of the father, hee argueth that no helpe is to bee yeilded vnto strangers, not that the power of Christ shoulde bee alwayes inclosed in so narrow boundes, but because the circumstance of the time did so require, that hee beginning at the Iewes, should then especially apply himselfe to them. As it was sayd, Mat. 10. 5. And the partition wall was not broken downe before the resurrection, that Christ might preach peace to the Gentiles which were strangers from the kingdome of God. Ephes. 2. 14. Therefore hee then forbade the Apostles to go any other where before they did sowe the first seed of the gospel in Iudea. Therefore it is true that he said in this place, that he is not sent but to the Iewes onely, vntill at length the Gentiles should succede in their order. Further, he calleth not only the elect the sheep of the house of Israel, but who so euer came of the stock of the holy fathers: because the Lord comprehended

prehended all in the covenant, and the redeemer was generally promised vnto all, as also with out exception hee reuealed and offered himselfe vnto all. This also is worthy to bee noted, that hee sayeth hee was sent to the lost sheepe: As in an other place he sayth, that he came to saue that which was lost. Matthew 18. 11. and Luke 19. 10. Now sith at this day his grace is common to vs with the Iewes, we doe gather what our condition is, vntill he appeare vnto vs a Sauour.

25. *Shee came and worshipped him.* This woman seemeth to strue with a stout obstinacie, so as she would wrest somewhat from him against his will: but it is not to be doubted but that the faith which she had conceiued of the goodnesse of the Messias so encouraged her. And that precise deniall of Christ to be any part of his office, which repugnancie terrified not her, nor withdrew her from her purpose, which came of this, that shee being wholly settled in the former feeling of faith which I spake of, admitted nothing contrary to her hope. And this is a true triall of faith, when by no meanes we suffer the generall principle of our saluation, which is grounded vpon the word of God, to be shaken in vs.

26. *It is not good to take the childrens bread.* Christ now with a sharper answer then the former, seemeth to take away all hope: for he doth not onely teach, that what grace soeuer hee receiued of the father, belonged to the Iewes, and must be employed vpon them, except they should be defrauded of their peculiar right: but very reprochfully he compareth the woman her selfe to a dogge, signifying that she was vnworthy to be made partaker of his grace. But that the meaning may be made plaine vnto vs, it must be known that he calleth not here the childrens bread, all the giftes of God, but onely those which peculiarly belong to Abraham & to his posteritie. For, from the beginning of the world Gods goodnes was so spread abroad in euery place, that it filled the heauen & the earth, so that all mortall men felt him for their father: but because hee vouchsafed to bestow greater honour vpon the children of Abraham, then vpon the rest of mankind, that is called the childrens bread, whatsoeuer properly pertaineth to that adoption, whereby the Iewes onely were chosen to be the children. The Gentiles do enioy in common the light of the Sunne, the breath of life, the nourishments of the earth, together with the Iewes: but the blessing which was hoped for in Christ, rested only in the house of Abraham. Wherefore, to cast that forth in comon without difference, which God with a singular priuiledge appoynted for one nation, was nothing else but an abolishing of the covenant of God. for by this meanes the Gentiles should be made equall with the Iewes, who should excell the as it was meete. Therefore Christ vseth the word *Casting*, signifying that that is not well placed, which is taken from the Church of God, and made comon for prophane men. But this ought to be restrained to that time, when God was onely called vpon in Iudea. For since the Gentiles are taken into the fellowship of the same saluatiō (which is done where christ shineth euery where by the Gospell) that difference is taken away, so that they which were dogges before, are now accounted amongst the children. But heere the pride of the flesh must of necessity be ouerthrowne, when wee heare that from the beginning wee are dogges. The excellency of mannes nature was greater from the beginning, in the which the image of God did shine, the that so reprochfull
a name

a name shoulde light vpon all the Gentiles, yea euen vpon kings, whom God adorned with his owne title: but the sinne and falling a way of Adam brought it to passe, that the Lorde should worthily cast into the dunghill with dogs, them that are degenerated by the offence of the firste father: Especially, where the comparison is made betweene the Iewes which are exempted from the common sorte, and the Gentiles which are banished from the kingdome of God. The purpose of Christe is more euidently declared by Marke, where it is sayde: *Let the children first be fed.* For he admonisheth the Cananite that shee doth preposterously: for that she as it were lieth to the table at the midst of supper. But though hee specially regarded the examining of the womans sayth, yet he also teacheth how horrible a vengeance remaineth for the Iewes, which refused so incomparable a good thing freely offered vnto them, which hee denied to others earnestly and feruently desiring the same.

27. Truth Lorde. The answer of the woman declareth that shee was not caried with a blinde or blunt violence, so that shee woulde directly stumble at the saying of Christ. For whereas God preferreth the Iewes before others, she also leaueth that honour of adoption vnto them, and sayeth that she will not hinder, but that Christ according to the order prescribed by God, should satisfie them: onely she desireth that a fewe crummies, falling as it were vnawares, may come to the dogs. And certainly God did neuer so shut vpp his grace amongst the Iewes, but that hee scattred a litle taste at the least of the same amongst the Gentiles. Therefore nothing could be more aptly or better spoken to expresse the grace of God, which then sprang amongst them.

28. Great is thy faith. First hee prayseth the sayth of the woman, then hee sayeth, that he graunted her prayers for her faith sake. Further, the greatnesse of her sayth especially shewed it selfe in that, that it being guided only with a litle sparke of doctrine, she not only knew the proper office of Christ, and attributed vnto him a celestially power, but constantly shee went forward though hard lets, suffered her selfe to be set at naught, so that she might hold that which she hoped for, that shee should not be without the ayd of Christ. To be short, she so seasoned her confidence with humilitie, that shee woulde not arrogate any thing rashly vnto her selfe: neither yet with the feeling of her owne vnworthinesse would shee shut the fountaine of the grace of Christe out from her. But by the commendation of this prophane woman, is the vnthankfulnesse of this people condemned, who boasted that they were dedicated to God, But how this woman might be saide to beleue rightly, who was not onely destitute of the promise of Christ, but is beaten away with his word cleane contrary, I haue shewed before. For though that sharply in shew he refuseth her prayers, yet being perswaded of the saluation promised of God through the Messias, shee ceaseth not to hope well: and therefore she thinketh that the gate is shut against her, not that she should altogether be druen away, but that shee should more earnestly endeavour with her faith to peirce through the chinkes of the same. The last clause containeth profitable doctrine, that faith obtaineth any thing of the Lord, because that he so much esteemeth the same, that he is alwayes ready to graunt our requestes so farre as it is expedient.

Math. 15

Marke 7.

Luke

29. So Iesus went away from thence, and came neare vnto the sea of Galile, and went vp into a Mountaine, and sate downe there.

30. And great multitudes came vnto him, hauing with them, halte, blinde, dumbe, maimed, and many other, and cast them down at Iesus feete and he healed them.

31. In so much that the multitude wondred, to see the dumbe speake, the maimed whole, the halt to goe, and the blind to see, and they glorified the God of Israell.

32. Then Iesus called his disciples vnto him and sayde: I haue compassiō on this multitude, because they haue continued with me already 3. daies and haue nothing to eate, and

I will not let them depart fasting, lest they faint in the way

33. And his Disciples sayd vnto him: Whence should wee get so much bread in the wilderness, as shoulde suffice so great a multitude?

34. And Iesus sayde vnto them: How many loaves haue yee? And they sayd, seuen, & a few little fishes,

35. Then he commanded the multitude to sit downe on the ground.

36. And tooke the seuen loaves and the fishes and gaue thanks, and brake them, and gaue to his disciples, and the disciples to the multitude.

37. And they did all eat, and were sufficed, and they tooke vp of the fragmentes that remained, seuen baskets full.

38. And

31. And hee departed againe from the coastes of Tyrus and Sidon, & came vnto the sea of Galile, through the midst of the coastes of Decapolis.

32. And they brought vnto him, one that was deafe, and stammered in his speech, & prayed him to put his hand vpon him

33. Then hee tooke him a side from the multitude, & put his fingers in his eares and did spit, and touched his tongue.

34. And looking vp to heauē, he sighed & said vnto him: Ephata, that is: Be opened

35. And straightway his eares were opened, and the string of his tongue was loosed, and he spake plaine.

36. And he commanded them that they shoulde tell no man: but how much soeuer he forbad the more a great deale they published it.

37. And were beyond measure astonied saying: He hath done all things well: he maketh both the deafe to heare, and the dumbe to speake.

Marke 8.

1. In those dayes, when there was a very great multitude, and had nothing to eate. Iesus called his disciples to him and said vnto them.

2. I haue compassion on the multitude, because they haue now continued with mee 3. dayes, and haue nothing to eate.

3. And If I send them away fasting to their owne houses, they would faint by the way: for some of them came from farre.

4. Then his Disciples answered him, howe can a man satisfie these with bread heere in the wilderness.

5. And he asked them: how many loaves haue yee: And they sayd, seuen.

6. Then hee commanded the multitude to sit downe on the ground: and he tooke the seuen loaves and gaue thanks, brake them, and gaue to his disciples to set before them, and they did set them before the people.

7. They had also a few small fishes: and when he had giuen thanks, he commanded them also to be set before them.

8. So

38. And they that had eaten, were foure thousand men beside women and little children.

39. Then Iesus sent away the multitude, and took ship, and came into the partes of Magdala

8. So they did eate and were sufficed, & tooke vpp of the broken meate, that was left, seuen baskets full. 9. (And they that had eaten, were about 4. thousand) so he sent them away. 10. And anon he entred into a ship with his Disciples, and came into the partes of Dalmanutha

29. So Iesus departed away from thence. Though Matthewe and Marke doe without doubt speake of one and the same returne of Christ out of the partes of Sidon, yet in some things they doe much differ. This is a small matter that one of them sayth, that he came into the partes of Magdala, and the other into the partes of Dalmanutha. for when as they were cities standing neare together, situated vpon the lake Genesareth towards mount Thabor, it is no maruayle that the countrie lying betweene them, be called by both their names. And Decapolis was so called of tenne cities, and because it was the region lying betweene Phœnice and the sea coast of Galile, which way Christe was to passe when he returned from Phœnicia into Galile of Iuda. There seemeth to bee greater difference, in that Mathew sayth that he healed many diseased with diuers kindes of sickness, and Marke maketh mention onely of one deafe man. Yet this knot also is easily dissolued: for Marke chose that miracle to set downe which was done by the way, the fame whereof being spread, moued the inhabitants of that countrie euery where, to bring forth moe vnto Christ to be healed. For we know that the Euangelists doe not curiously set downe all things: but they are so spare in reporting of the miracles, that they touch onely a fewe things for an example. Also it was sufficient for Marke to shewe one example, wherein the power of Christ was manifested, euen as hee doeth in others such like, which follow a little after.

MAR. 32. They brought vnto him a deafe man. To what purpose they prayed him to lay his hand on him, may be gathered by the former places: for the laying on of hands was a solemne signe of blessing, whereby the gifts of the holy ghost were also giuen. And without doubt Christ often vsed this rite, so that these men demanded nothing but that they knew he had vsed heretofore. But Christ vseth other signes: for hee toucheth the tongue of the dumbe man with his spittle, and putteth his finger into his eares. The only laying on of his hands had bin effectuell inough: yea, though he had not moued his finger hee could haue done this only with a becke: but it appeareth that hee vsed signes frankly as was most for the profit of men: as now, putting spittle to his tongue, hee would declare that the gift of speaking cometh from him alone: thrusting his finger into his eares, hee taught that it was a gifte proper to him, as it were to boare open the deafe eares, for it is needelesse to run to allegories: and we see, they that haue most subtilly dalied in that course, are so far from bringing forth any thing that is sound, that they rather make the scripture to become a iesting stocke. Therefore let this one thing satisfie discrete readers, that we obtaine of Christ both speach and hearing by prayer, in so much as he infuseth his force to our tongues, and pearceth into our eares with his fingers.

That

That he remoueth the deafe man from the multitude, hee doeth it partly of that purpose, that he would not shew the glory of his Godhead to the rude, and such as were not yet fit witnesses, but that they should beholde the same a farre off: partly, that he might the more freely powre forth his seruent prayer. For that hee looked vp to heauen, and sighed, was a signe of a vehement affection: whereby is perceined how great his loue was towards men, whose miseries he so bewailed. Neither is it to be doubted, but by the taking of spittle out of his owne mouth, to put into his mouth, and by putting his fingers, his will was to testifie and shew the same kinde and louing affection. Yet he declarereth that hee hath great power in curing all diseases, and in giuing health, when as hee simply commaundeth the tongue and eare, to be opened, Neyther was it without consideration, that Marke setteth downe that Chalde worde, but that it might testifie the diuine power of Christ. Amongst other trifles where with foolish men defiled baptisme, heere they hadde one Apish iesting toye. By the which example wee are admonished, that there is no ende of licentiousnesse, when men begin to dally with the mysteries of God at their owne pleasure.

36. *Hee commaunded them, that they should tell no man.* Though there are many interpreters which wrest these commandements into an other sense, as if Christ had purposely prouoked them to spread the fame of the miracle: yet that seemeth to be the more simple meaning, which I alleaged other wher, that his purpose onely was to deferre it to an other time more conuenient and fite. Wherefore I thinke not otherwise, but that their zeale was vnadvised, while they being commaunded to hold their peace, doe hast to speake. Yet it is not to bee wondered at, that men not accustomed to the doctrine of Christ, should be caried with so great a zeale, when it was not conuenient. Yet Christ turneth that to his owne glory, which was vnadvisedly attempted by them: because both the miracle was knowne, and that whole region despising the authour of heavenly giftes, was made inexcusable.

37. *Hee hath done all things well.* After that Mathewe had gathered many miracles together, hee addeth at the length this clause, the multitude wondered and gaue the glory to the God of Israell: namely, because that God shewing his power by vnwonted meanes, renewed the remembrance of his couenaut. But in Markes words, the figure Antithesis may be vnderstoode: for whereas the rumour of Christ was very diuers, the multitude gaue testimonie that they were wicked and malicious people, whosoever would speake euill of his deedes when as all his workes rather deserued high prayse, then so to be quarelled at. And wee know that the sense of nature teacheth that nothing is more vnrighteous, then to draw good workes into blame and hatred.

Mat. 22 *I haue compassion on this multitude.* Here is a miracle set downe not vnlike the other, which we expounded a little before: this is the only difference, that where before Christ fed fise thousand men with fise loaves and two fishes: now foure thousand are fed with feuen loaves and a few fishes. Also, when 12 baskets were filled with fragments then, now of greater aboundance fewer broken meates remaine. Heereby we learne that the power of God is not tied to means or helps, neither is it any matter before him, whether it be great or litle:

as Jonathan sayd, speaking of his small army, and of the huge multitude of his enemies, 1. Sa. 14. 6. And as the blessing of God satisfied as well with one loafe as with 10. is enough to feede a great multitude: so if that be wanting, a hundred loaves shall not suffice to feede ten men: for where the stiffe of bread shall be broken, though the meale be yeilded by waight from the mill, and the breade from the ouen, yet shall it not auail to stufte the belly by deuouring it. The 3. daies fasting whereof Christ speaketh, must be vnderstood, not that they abide three dayes without meate, but because there was no great prouision in those desert places, so that of necessitie there wanted ordinary food. Also, that in those hot regions, there is lesse stomacke to eate, then vnder our grosse and cold aire wherefore it is no maruaile, if they abstained the longer from meate.

33. *Where should we get so much bread in the wilderness.* The Disciples doe bewray too beastly a blockishnes, that then at the least they call not to minde, that which they had learned of the power & grace of Christ, which they might haue applyed to this present vse. but as if they had neuer seene any such thinge, they forget to seeke for remedy of him. And because the like sluggishnes doth daily creepe vpon vs, so much more heede must be taken, least at any time our mindes be withdrawne from considering the benefits of God: that the experience of the times past may teach vs hereafter, to hope for the same that GOD hath now once or oftner bestowed vpon vs.

Mathew 16.

Marke 8.

Luke 12.

1. Then came the Pharisees and Sadduces, and did tempt him, desiring him to shew them a signe from heauen. 2. But hee answered and sayd vnto them: when it is euening yee say faire weather: for the skie is red. 3. And in the morning ye say, To day shall be a tempest: for the skie is red and lowring: O hypocrites: yee can discern the face of the skie, and can ye not discern the signes of the times. 4. The wicked generation and adulterous seeketh a signe, and there shall no signe bee giuen it: but the signe of the Prophete Iona: so hee left them, and departed.

11. And the Pharisees came forth, and began to dispute with him, seeking of him a signe from heauen, and tempting him.

12. Then hee sighed deeply in his spirit, and sayd: why doth this generation seeke a signe? Verily I say vnto you, a signe shall not bee giuen vnto this generation.

13. So hee left them, & went into the ship againe and departed to the other side.

54. Then said hee to the people, whē ye see a cloud rise out of the west, straight way ye say a shower cometh, and so it is.

55. And when yee see the South winde blow, ye say that it will be hot, and so cometh to passe.

56. Hypocrites, yee can discern the face of the earth, and of the skie: but why discern ye not this time?

57. Yea, and why iudge ye not of your selues what is right?

1. Then came the Pharisees. Marke sayeth that they beganne to dispute: whereof may bee gathered, that when they were overcome with reasons: this

this was their last refuge, as obstinate men so oft as they are drinen to extremities, yet least they should be enforced to subscribe to the truth, they commonly vse to pretend somewhat besides the cause. And though the manner of their disputation is not expresse, yet it seemeth likely to me that they brabled about the calling of Christ, why he durst innouate any thing, why hee lifted vp and bare himselfe so high, as if that by his comming the kingdom of God should bee restored to the estate of the same. When there remained nothing that they might object against his doctrine, they desired to haue a signe giuen them from heauen. But it is certaine that they would not haue yeelded more to a hundred signes, then they did to the testimonie of the scripture. Note also that the power of Christ was manifested to their sight already by many myracles, and might as it were be handled with their hands. They despise the signes whereby Christ reuealed himselfe familiarly vnto them, therefore howe much lesse would they profit by an obscure signe fetched from farre. So the Papists at this day, as if the doctrine of the Gospell had neuer beene established, doe desire to haue it confirmed vnto them by new myracles. It is also to bee noted that when the Pharisees had great contention with the Sadduces, neither was it only a bitter hatred, but there were daily hotte strifes betwene them: yet now they doe mutually ioyne together against Christ: so when the wicked are at debate, yet their deadly discords hinder them not, but that they will conspire against God, and as it were by making leagues, they doe ioyne hands together to ouerthrowe the truth. By the worde *Tempting*, the Euangelistes doe signifie that they came not with sincere munes, nor with a desire to learne: but to take him by deceit, for that they thought should be denied them, or at the least that Christe could not doe it, as they imagined. For because they accounted no better of him but viley and basely, they had no other purpose, then by shewing his base estate, to ouerthrow that estimation which he had heretofore gotten amongst the people. So the vnbelecuers are saide to tempt God, as it as they not obtaining what soeuer their pleasure desireth, do fall to murmuring, and doe charge God with want of power.

2. *When it is euening.* In these woordes Christe declareth that his power is sufficiently declared, so that they might know the time of their visitation, if they did not see the open light, by the shutting of their eyes of their owne accorde. And hee vseth a notable similitude and very fitte for the purpose: though the course of the ayre be changeable, so that now of a sodaine a tempest riseth, now vnlooked for it waxeth cleare: yet nature directing them, menne by signes doe prognosticate before, whether the day will be faire or foule. Therefore Christ demaundeth why they doe not know the kingdome of God, being reuealed by as euident signes as the other: for hereby it certainly appeared that they were too much giuen to earthly and transitory commodities, contemning what soeuer pertained to the heauenly and spirituall life: and they were not thus blind so much by ignorance, as of wilfull malice.

Therefore hee calleth them also hypocrites, because they fained to seeke that, which being shewed them, they would not see. Further, the same reproofe doeth almoste appertaine to the whole worlde: for because that menne doe bende their witte, and apply their senses

to the present vse, there is almost no manne who is not wise enough in this behalfe, or at the least hauing obtained some meane knowledge, followeth that which is expedient. Then whereof commeth it, that wee vnderstand not those signes wherby God calleth vs vnto him, but because that euery man giueth him selfe to a wilfull sluggishnes? The calling of Christ and the present offering of eternall saluation was manifested to the Scribes as well by the law & the Prophets, as by his owne doctrine which was confirmed by myracles. There are very many such at this day, which do pretend that in doubtful matters they haue iust cause to suspend their iudgement, because that a resolute determinatiō must be waighted for: Nay, they think this a point of great wildome, of purpose to auoyd all inquiry after the truth. As though it were not a point of great foolishnes to neglect the eternall saluation of soules, when as they so diligently provide for those things which are of the flesh and of the earth, and in the meane season to pretende vaine excuses of grosse and deepe ignorance. But certain vnlearned men do gather too much absurdly out of this place, that it is not lawfull by looking into the skie to iudge either of temperature or of stormes: For christ rather of the right course of nature argueth that they shuld iustly perish for their vnthankfulnesse, which are so quicke witted in things pertaining to this present life, and do wittingly & willingly ouerwhelme the heauely light with their owne blockishnesse.

Marke addeth, that Christe sighed in spirite, in which wordes hee declareth that he tooke it grieuously and bitterly, when he saw these vnthankfull menne so stubbornly to resist against God. And certainly, it becōmeth all them that are studious of the glory of God, and carefull of mans saluation, that nothinge wounde them deeplier with sorrowe, then when they see the vnbeleeuers of sette purpose stoppe vppe from themselves the meanes whereby they shoulde beleeue, and to apply all the witte they haue to that purpose, that they might darken the light of the woorde and workes of God with their mistes. I thinke that the word Spirite is put heere Emphatically, that wee might knowe that this sigh came of the deepe affection of the hearte, least any Sophister shoulde say that Christe made but an outward shewe of sorrowe, which he felt not inwardly. For it coulde not be otherwise but that holy soule which was gouerned by the spirite of zeale, should bee altogether grieved at such vngodly frowardnesse.

27. *Why iudge you not of your selues.* Heere Christe openeth the fountaine from whence the mischiefe sprange, and toucheth the bile it selfe, as it were with a lance: namely, forthat they descended not into their owne consciences, nor made there any search with themselves before God what is right. For hereof commeth it, that the hypocrites are so proude in there quarelling, & that they cast forth such arrogant speeches into the ayre without regard: they gather not their senses together, neither do they setthēselues before the iudgement seate of God, that truth being once knowne, might haue the victorie. Further, that which Luke sayeth was spoken to the multitude, differreth not from that which Mattheue and Marke reporte: because that it is probable that Christe did generally bende his speech againste the followers and disciples of the Scribes, and other such like contemners of God, whom he

saw to be too many: so that this complaint or rebuke lighted vpon the whole cōpany of these lewd ones.

Mat. 4. *This wicked generation.* This place was expounded in the 12. chapter. And the summe is that the Iewes were satisfied with no signes, but that their wicked desire did still prouoke them to tempt God. Neither doth he simply call them an adulterous generation, because they desire any signe, which God some time granteth to his children: but because they of purpose prouoke God, therefore he sayth that he shalbe restored to them againe aliue, as Ionas was. So Mat reporteth. Marke maketh no mention of Ionas, yet hath the same sense. For this neither could serue for a signe vnto them, that Christ being raised from the dead, would send forth the sounding voyce of his gospell into all places.

Math. 16

Marke 8.

Luke 12

5. And when his Disciples were come to the other side, they had forgotten to take bread with them.

6. Then Iesus said vnto them: Take heede and beware of the leauen of the Pharisees and Sadduces.

7. And they thought in themselves saying: It is because wee haue brought no bread.

8. But Iesus knowing it, sayd vnto them: O yee of little faith, why thinke yee thus in your selues, because ye haue brought no bread?

9. Do yee not yet perceiue, neyther remēber the fīue loaves, when there were fīue thousand men, and howe many baskets tooke ye vp?

10. Neither the seuen loaves, when there were 4000. men, and howe many baskets tooke yee vp?

11. Why perceiue yee not, that I sayd not vnto you concerning breade, that ye should beware of the leauen of the Pharisees and Sadduces?

12. Then vnderstoode they that hee had not sayd that they shoulde beware of the leauen of bread, but of the doctrine of the Pharisees and Sadduces.

14. And they had forgotten to take bread, neither had they in the shipp with them but one loafe.

15. And he charged them, saying Take heede, and beware of the leauen of the Pharisees, and of the leauen of Herod.

16. And they thought among themselves, saying: It is because we haue no bread.

17. And when Iesus knewe it, hee sayde vnto them: Why reason yee thus, because ye haue no bread: perceiue ye not yet, neither vnderstand haue ye your hearts yet hardened?

18. Haue ye eyes and see not? and haue ye eares and heare not? and do you not remember?

19. When I brake the fīue loaves among the fīue thousand, howe many baskets full of broken meate tooke ye vp? they sayd vnto him, twelue.

20. And when I brake seuen among foure thousand, how many baskets of the leauings tooke yee vpp? and they sayd, seuen,

21. Then he sayd vnto them: how is it that yee vnderstand not?

1 In the mean time, there gathered together an innumerable multitude of people so that they trode one another: and he began to say to his disciples: firste, take heede to your selues of the leauen of the Pharisees, which is hypocrisie.

5. When the disciples were come. Heere Christ of the former matter taketh occasion to exhort his Disciples, to keepe themselves from all corruptions which might hinder sincere godlinesse. The Pharisees had beene there a little before, who hadde giuen testimonie of a poysoned frowardnesse: The

Sadduces had kept them companie : of the other side Herod a most vile aduersary and corrupter of sound doctrine. The disciples being amongst these dangers it was necessary that they should be warned to looke to themselves : for when as the wisdom of man doth incline of it selfe to vanitie & errors, when lewd denices, false doctrines and such other mischiefs doe compasse vs about, there is nothing more easie for vs then to fall away from the true and naturall puritie of the word of God. If it come to passe that wee be insinared, it can neuer be, that true Religion should haue full possession of vs. But that the matter may more euidently appeare, let vs consider Christes wordes.

6. *Take heede of the leauen of the Pharisees.* Mat. ioyneth the Sadduces with the Pharisees. Marke putteth Herode in those secondes roume. Luke maketh mention onely of the Pharisees. Though it is vncertaine whether Luke rehearseth the same speech of Christ : and defineth the leauen to be hypocrisie, and also doth briefly set downe this sentence, as if there were no doubtfullnesse in the wordes. And though the Metaphore of leauen, which is here applyed to false doctrine, might other where be transferred to hypocrisie of life and behaviour, or else that the same w^{is} spoken twise : yet there is no absurditie if wee say that those sayings, which the other two according to the course of the historie, doe set forth more largely, by Luke are touched somewhat otherwise, as not in the same place, or order, so that yet there be no difference in the matter. If it be lawfull to follow this coniecture, hypocrisie shall signifie somewhat else then a counterfeit and faigned shew of wisdom, namely the fountaine it selfe and matter of vaine pompe, which boasting of some great thing before men, is of no estimation before God. For as the cies of the Lord, as Ieremie witnesseth 5. 3, behold the truth : so by his word he directeth the faithfull in perfect holines, that with a perfect and sincere heart they may cleaue vnto right outinesse, according to that saying, Deut. 10. 12. And now O Israel, what doth the Lord require of thee, that thou shouldest cleaue vnto him with all thy heart, and with all thy soule ? But on the contrary side, the spirituall worthipp being neglected, they do bring in the traditions of men fading colours, as if god could be caught with such baits. For although the outward ceremonies serue to make a shewe, yet before God they are but childish trifles, further then wee be exercised by them in true holines. Now we vnderstand why Luke put hypocrisie in stead of faigned doctrine, and vnder this name he comprehendeth the leauens of men, which doe onely puffe vp with a vaine shew, and before God haue no soundnes in them : nay, they draw the mindes of men from the right studie of godlinesse to vaine rites not to bee esteemed. But because that Mathewe his exposition is plainer, it shall bee best to rest vppon that. When the Lord had reprooued the Disciples, they at the length vnderfloode, that they were commaunded to take heede of the doctrine, it is certaine that this was the meaning of Christ, to arme them against the present corruptions, with the which they were compassed on euery side. And therefore hee speaketh expressly of the Pharisees and Sadduces, because those two sectes tyrannously reigned at that time in the Church, and with their corrupt doctrines they ouerwhelmed the doctrine of the Lawe and of the Prophets, so that these remained almost nothing sound or perfect. Further, it is demanded wherefore Marke putteth Herode amongst the

the number of false teachers, who professed no such thing : I answer when as hee was halfe a Iewve degenerate and vnfaithfull, hee endeoured by all the subtleties hee could to drawe the people after him . For this is the manner of all Apostates to adde some mixture, that a newe Religion may spring, which may abolishe the former . Therefore, because that he endeoured craftily to overthrow the principles of the true and auncient religion, that that Religion might at the length flourish, which should bee most agreeable to his tyranny : and because he endeoured to bring in a newe kinde of Iudaisme , the Lorde doeth not without cause commaunde also to beware of his leauen. For as the Scribes scattered their errors out of the temple of God : so Herodes court was an other shoppe of Sathan, for the forging of other errors. As we see the like in Popery at this day. Antichrist doeth not vomite his subtleties onely out of the Churches and dennes of Sophisters and Monkes : but hee also proppeth vp his kingdom with the helpe of courtly diuinitie, so as he wil omitt no craft. And as Christe then mette with these present euilles, and gaue his warning to beware of that which was most noysome : wee being warned by this example, let vs learne wisely to weigh what corruptions may annoy vs. A man may looner mixe fire and water together, then make the inuentions of the Pope to agree with the Gospell. Therefore whosoeuer desireth with good sayth to be come Christes discipule, lette him studie to keepe his soule pure from those leauens. If he be now already infected with the same, let him labour so much the more in cleansing himselfe, vntill no more dregges nor filthinesse sticke in him. And now, because that on the other part troublefome men doe attempt diuers wayes to corrupt sound doctrine, the faithfull must watch diligently for the auoyding of such subtilties, so as they may celibrate a continual Passouer with the sweete bread of truth. And because that vile wickednesse, noysom leauen, and most deadly payson ouerwhelmeth now euery place, let men employ all their senses to this warning most necessary of all.

8. *Why thinke you thus in your selues.* The disciples do againe declare how euill they haue profited both by their maisters doctrine, & also by his wonderfull works. For that which he had sayde of taking heede of leauen, they so tooke as if christ would onely draw them from the outward felowhippe. For because that it was a custome receiued amongst the Iewes, that they shoulde not eate meate together with prophane menne, the disciples thought that the Pharisees were of the same sort and number. And this ignorance was to be tollerated in some sorte : but because they forgate so late a benefite, they thinke not that the remedy is in Christes hande, that they shoulde not be compelled to defile themselves with meate and drinke : hee rebuketh them more sharply, as they were well worthy, and certainly this vnthankfulnesse was too grosse, when as they hadde so lately seene bread created of nothing for the satisfying of many thousands of menne, and that being twise done, now to take care for bread, as if the same power were not remaining in the master still. By the which wordes wee do gather that all they are condemned of infidelitie. which hauing once or twice tryed the power of God, doe afterward distrust . For as sayth nourisheth the remembrance of the gifts of God in our hearts, so except the same faith be overwhelmed they wil neuer be forgotten.

12. They vnderstood that he had spoken of the doctrine. It is not hard to bee vnderstoode, but that Christ opposeth this word leauen against the simple & pure word of God. Christ taketh the same before in the good parte, when he tyde that the Gospell was like to leauen: but the scripture for the most parte doeth hereby signifie any thing that is added, whereby the natural purity of any thing is hindred. But in this place these two contraries doe without doubt answere the one to the other, the simple truth of God and the inuentions, which men deuise out of their owne brayne. Neither is there any cause why any Sophyster should seeke to slip away, denying this to be vnderstoode of euery doctrine: because there can no other doctrine be found, which beareth the name of pure & sweete doctrine, then that which proceeded from God. Whereof it followeth that what mixture soeuer commeth from any other, is called leauen. As Paul 2. Cor. 11 3. also teacheth that the faith is corrupted allsoone as we are drawne from the simplicitie that is in Christ. Now is it to be seene, whose doctrine the Lord would haue them to beware of. Then certainly was the ordinary power of the Church in the hands of the Scribes and priests, amongst whom the Pharisees were chiefe. When as Christ by name warneth his from their doctrine, it followeth that they all must be refused which mixe their owne inuentions with the word of God, or which trust in any straunge thing, what degree of honour soeuer they are placed in, or what proud title soeuer they beare. Wherefore accursed and corrupt is their subiection which submit themselues to the traditions and lawes of the Pope.

Matth.

Marke. 8.

Luke.

22. And hee came to Bethsaida, and they brought a blind man vnto him, and desired him to touch him.

23. Then he tooke the blinde by the hand and lead him out of the towne, and spit in his eyes, and put his handes vpon him, and asked him if he saw ought.

24. And he looked vp, and sayd, I see men: for I see them walking like trees.

25. After that, he put his hands againe vpon his eyes, and made him looke againe. And he was restored to his sight, & saw euery man a farrre off, clearely.

26. And he sent him home to his house, saying: neither goe into the towne, nor tell it to any in the towne.

This myracle, the declaration whereof is omitted by others, seemeth to be reported by Marke, especially for this circumstance, that Christ did not at once, as he was often wont to doe, but by little & little restored the blinde man his sight: the which it is likely that he did it to this end, that he might in this manne set an example of his free dispensation, that he is not bound to any certaine rule, but that he may shew his power either this way or that. Therefore he doth not open the eyes of the blind so perfectly, that he may see cleare with the: but he instilleth a darke and a confuse sight into them: then by putting his hands vpon them againe, he giueth the a perfect sight: so the grace of Christ, which before was suddenly powred vpon others, commeth as it were drop by drop into this man.

24. *I see men.* The blind man was asked this question for the disciples, that they might know that somewhat was now giuen him : but yet that there was but a little beginning only, & not fully healed. Therefore he answereth that he seeth men, because he seeth some walking, which are straight like vnto trees. By which words he confesseth, that his sight is not so cleare, as to discern men frō trees: but yet that he can see now a little: because that by their motiō he gesseeth them to be men whome he seeth to be of a straight stature: in which sence hee also sayth, that they are like vnto trees. Wherefore we see that onely by coniecture he sayeth that he seeth men.

26. *He sent him home to his house.* That christ suffered him not to returne to Bethsaïda, where many might haue bin witnesses of the myracle, some thinke that it was done, because that Christ would punish the inhabitants of that place by depriuing them of the vse of his fauor. Whatsoeuer the cause was, it is certain that he wrought not this myracle to that end that it should alwaies be buried, but he would haue this with many others kept secret, vntill that the finnes of the world being washed away by his death, he should ascend into the glory of the father.

Matth. 16.

Marke 8.

Luke 9.

13. Now, when Iesus came into the coastes of Casarea Philippi, hee asked his disciples, saying, whome doe menne say that I the sonne of manne am?

14. And they sayd, some say, Iohn Baptist: and some Elias: and others Ieremias, or one of the Prophets.

15. He sayd vnto them, but whome say ye that I am?

16. Then Simon Peter answered, and sayd, Thou art the Christ the son of the liuing God.

17. And Iesus answered, and sayde so him, Blessed art thou Simon, the sonne of Ionas: for fleshe and bloud hath not reuealed it vnto thee, but my father, which is in heauen.

18. And I say also vnto thee, that thou art Peter, and vpon this rocke I will build my Church: and the gates of hell shall not overcome it.

19. And I will giue vnto thee the keyes of the kingdome of heauen, and what soeuer thou shalt binde vpon earth, shall be bounde in heauen: and what soeuer thou shalt loose on earth shall be loosed in heauen.

27. And Iesus went out, and his disciples into the townes of Casarea Philippi. And by the way he asked his disciples, saying vnto them, whom do men say that I am?

28. And they answered, some say, Iohn baptist: and some, Elias, and some one of the prophets.

29. And hee saide vnto them, but whom saye yee that I am? Then Peter answered and said vnto him, thou art the Christ.

18. And it came to passe as he was alone praying, his Disciples were with him, & he asked them, saying, who say the people that I am?

19. They answered and sayd, Iohn Baptist: and others saye, Elias, and some say that one of the olde Prophets is risen againe.

20. And he sayd vnto them, but whom say yee that I am? Peter answered and sayd the Christ of God.

13. *Into the coastes of Casarea Philippi.* Marke sayeth that this communication was had by the way : and Luke, when he had prayed, and had none with him but his disciples : Matthew doth not so exactly note the time : yet it is certaine that the three doe report the same history : & it may be that Christ in that iourney, after hee had made some stay and prayed, demaunded this of his disciples . Also because there were two Casareaes : that was auncient and more famous, which was firste the tower of Straton : and this was scituated at the foote of Mount Libanus, not farre from Iordan, the epithite is added for difference sake . For though some thinke that it was built in the same place, where the towne Dan stood in times past : yet, because it was lately built by Philippe the Tetrach, it was called Philippy . *Whome doe men say that I am ?* This may seeme to bee the meaning, what should be the common name of the Redeemer, who was become the sonne of man : Yet the question is otherwise : namely, what opinion men had of Iesus the son of Mary : And after this manner he calleth himselfe the sonne of man, as if he should haue said, whilst I am now clothed with flesh, & am conuersant vpon earth, as one of the sonnes of men, what iudgement is there of mee ? But the purpose of Christ was thoroughly to strengthen his disciples in an assured faith, that amongst sundry opinions they should not wauer, as we shall presently see.

14. *Some say Iohn.* There is nothing spoken heere either of the professed enemies of Christ, neither of the prophane contemners, but of the more sound and sincere part of the people, and as of the chosen flower of the Church. For the disciples doe only make mention of them, which speake honorably of christ: and yet when the truth was proposed vnto them, no man tended to that scope, but all men vanished away in their owne delights. Whereby wee perceiue how weake the wit of man is, which not onely conceiueth nothing of it selfe, that is right and true, but even gathereth errours of true principles.

Adde this also, that when Christe was the onely signe of concord and of peace, whereby God would gather the whole worlde vnto him, the greater parte doe hereby take the occasion of more dissention. And euen amongst the Iewes, the vnity of faith was no other where settled then in Christe, and yet they which seeme before to haue some agreement amongst themselues, are now seuered into sundry opinions. Also, wee see how one error engendreth another : for because this opinion was settled in the minds of the common people, that the soules went into diuers bodies, hereof it came that they were the rather bent to this false imagination . But though at the coming of Christe the Iewes were in this manner deuided, yet this varietie of opinions should not haue hindred the godly, but that they should haue desired the right knowledge of him. For if any manne vnder that pretence giuing himselfe to sluggishnes, hadde neglected to seeke Christ, euen in our iudgement hee should be excusable. Much lesse then shall he escape the iudgement of God, if any manne by reason of diuisions shall abhorre Christe, or of the false opinions of menne shall take occasion of loathing, so that he will not vouchsafe to apply himselfe vnto Christ.

15. But whome say yee that I am? Heere Christ seuereth his disciples from the rest of the people, wherby it might the better appeare to be an absurd thing for vs to be drawne from the vinitie of faith, though others doe disagree. For whosoever doe simply addist themselues to Christ, and doe not strue to addo any thing of their owne head to the Gospell, the true light shall neuer fayle them. But here is great diligence required, that while the whole world flydeth after their owne inuentions, they shoulde take fast and sure holde of Christe. Because that Sathan could not take away from the Iewes the perswasion they had out of the lawe and the Prophetes of Christ to come, hee diuersly transfiguring him, hee deuided him as it were into partes: then hee thrust amongst them many false Christes, that the true Redeemer should not be esteemed. He left not the same subtilties afterward, either to roote Christe utterly out, or to thrust an other person in his rounge. Wherefore amongst the confused & contrary speaches of the world, let this voyce of Christ sound alwayes in our eares, wherby hee separateth vs from wandring and vnconstant men, that we should not follow the multitude, neither that our faith should wauer amongst the contrary floudes of opinions.

16. *Thou art Christ.* A short confession, but which containeth in it the whole summe of our saluation, For vnder the title of Christ is comprehended the eternall kingdome and priesthoode, that he would reconcile God vnto vs, and that sinnes being washed away by his owne sacrifice, hee woulde obtayne a perfect righteousness. Then that he would preferue vs being receiued into his faith and custody, and would adorne and enrich vs with all kinde of blessings. Marke onely hath, *Thou art Christ*, and Luke hath, *the Christ of God*, but in the same sense. For in times past they called the kings, which were annoynted of God, the Christes of God.

And Luke vied this phrase before, where he sayd that Simeon had answered giuen him from heauen, that he should not die before he should see the Christ of the Lord. For surely it was a diuine redemption, which god gaue by the had of his son. Therefore it was necessary that hee that shoulde bee the redeemer, should come a noted person from heauen with the annoyntment of God. Mat. thew expresseth it more plainly, that hee is the *Sonne of the liuing God*. For though it may bee that Peter did not as yet so expressly vnderstand how Christ was begotten of God: yet hee beleued that hee was so excellent a person, that hee had his beginning from God, not as other men, but that the luely and true godhead dwelt in his flesh. When the epithite *liuing* is giuen to God, it is a note to make a difference betweene him and dead Idols, which are nothing.

17. *Blessed art thou Simon.* When as this is life eternall, to knowe one God and whome he sent Iesus Christ, it is not without cause that Christe pronounceth him blessed, who confessed this from his heart. But hee spake not this particularly to Peter alone, but his will was to shewe where the onely felicitie of the whole worlde is placed. And that all men may aspire to the same with greater desire: first, it must bee holden that all men are miserable and cursed by nature, vntill they finde remedy by Christ. Then must bee added, whosoever obtayneth Christ, waiteth nothing at all of a perfect blessing.

blessednes, seeing wee can desire nothing that is better then the eternall glory of God into the possession whereof Christ doth bring vs. *Flesh and bloud.* Vnder the person of this one man, Christ admonisheth all men that faith must bee asked of his father, and that the prayse of the same must bee attributed to his grace: for the peculiar lightening of God is heere opposed to flesh and bloude. Whereby we gather that mens mindes are voyde of vnderstanding to perceiue the misteries of the heavenly wisdom hidden in Christ: nay, all humane senses doe in this behalfe sayle, vntill God open our eyes to see his glory in Christ. Therefore let no man trusting in his owne wit, lift vp himselfe in pride: but humbly let vs suffer our selues to be taught inwardly of the father of lightes, that his onely spirit may lighten our darknesse. And now they which are indeued with faith, acknowledging their owne blindnes, let them learne to yelde that to God, which to him is due.

18. *But I say vnto thee.* Christ by these wordes declareth howe much Peters confession pleaseth him, in that he beltoweth so great a reuward vpon it. For though he had giuen to Simon his disciple the name of Peter, & had freely appointed him to be his Apostle, yet these which were free giftes, he ascribeth as it were in steede of a reuward to faith, which is a thinge not strange in the scripture. Further, Peter is adorned with a double honour: for the first of them doth belong to his owne priuate saluation, and the last to his Apostolicall function. When he sayth, *Thou art Peter*, he confirmeth that he gaue not this name before to him in vaine, because he should be stedfast, as a liuing stone in the Temple of God. Though this extendeth to all the faithfull, Ephe. 2. 21. Euery one of whō are the Temples of God, and by faith being compact amongst themselves, doe together make one temple: yet this excellency of Peter is noted amongst the rest, euen as euery man receiueth more or lesse in his order, according to the measure of the gift of Christ. *Vpon this rocke.* Hereby it appeareth how the name of Peter agreeth, as with the name of Simon, so also with the rest of the faithfull: because that they being grounded vpon the faith of Christ, are with a holy consent built vp together into a spirituall building, that God may dwell in the midst of them. For Christ declared that this should be the common foundatiō of all his Church, he would gather vnto Peter what company of the faithfull so euer should be in the world: as if hee should haue sayd, you are now a small number of men, and therefore this your confessiō is of small estimation at this present: but the time shall shortly come, when it shall shew it selfe magnifically and shall spread it selfe more at large. And thus did not a litle preuaile for the encouraging of the disciples to bee constant: for that though their faith was yet obscure and bate, yet they were chosen of the Lord as the first frutes, that at the length of that contemptible beginning, a newe Church should arise, which should stand as a conqueror against all the assaults of the infernall powers. For though the pronoun *It*, may bee referred either to the faith, or to the Church, yet the latter sense doth better agree, for that the strength of the Church shall stand vnuanquished against all the power of Sathan: namely, because the truth of God shall alwaies continue vnshaken, wherupon the faith of the same is staid And that saying of Ioh 1 ep. 5. 4. answereth to this sentence. This is the victory, which ouercōmeth the world, euen your faith. A promise worthy to be noted,

that

that who soeuer are vnited in Christe, acknowledging Christ, and him to bee a mediatur, shall continue to the ende safe from all annoyauce. For that which is spoken of the body of the Church appertaineth to the perticular members of the same, so farre forth as they are one in Christ. Yet hereby we are admonished, that so long as the Church shall bee a Pilgrim vpon earth, it shall not bee quiet, but subiect to many troubles. For therefore is Sa-han denied the superiority: because he would daily be against it. Therefore that we may vse this saying of Christe, let vs without feare glory against Sathan, and by sayth let vs triumph ouer all his bandes: so againe let vs knowe, that we haue as it were an alarme sounded vnto vs, that we might be alwayes ready and prepared to the battaile. It is euident that by the name of gates is noted euery kind of power and strong holde.

19. *And to thee will I giue the keyes.* Christ now beginneth to speake heere of the publike office: that is of the Apostleshippe, whose dignitie is adorned with a double title. For Christ sayth, that the ministers of the Gospell are as porters of the kingdom of heauen, because they beare the keyes of the same: secondly hee addeth that they haue power to binde and to lose, which in effectual to the heauens. The similitude of keyes is aptly applied to the office of teaching, as Christ sayth in Luke, 11. 52. That the Scribes and the Pharises, because they were interpreters of the law, had likewise the key of the the kingdome of heauen. For we know that the gate of life is not otherwise opened vnto vs, then by the word of God. Whereof it followeth that it is deliuered vnto the ministers, as a key into their hand. They which thinke that keyes in the plurall number is therefore sayd: because the Apostles hadde not onely commaundement given them to open, but also to shut, doe not speake without some probable likelihood: yet, if any man will take it otherwise, let him vse his owne sence. It is demanded why the Lord should promise to giue that to Peter, which he seemed to haue giuen before by creating him an Apostle. But this question was answered in the tenth chapter, where I sayd that those twelue at the first were sent forth Preachers but for a time: so they returning to Christe ended the course of that their calling. And after that Christe rose againe from the dead, then beganne they to be appointed ordinary teachers of the Church, this honour is giuen them in respect of the time to come.

What soeuer thou shalt binde. The second Metaphor or similitude properly belongeth to note the forgiveness of sinnes. For Christe by his Gospell deliuering vs from the guiltinesse of eternall death, loseth the snares of the curse wherein we were holden bound. Therefore he testifieth that the doctrine of the Gospell was ordained for the losing of our bandes, that wee being loosed by the voice and testimony of men here vpon earth, should also in deed be loosed in heauen. But because that very many doe not onely wickedly refuse the deliuerance offered, but also by their frowardnes do procure a heauier iudgement for themselves: therefore the power, yea and commaundement to binde, is also giuen to the ministers of the Gospell. Yet this is to be noted, that this is accidental to the Gospell, and as it were, against the nature of the same: As Paul, 2. Cor. 10. 6 teacheth, when he speaking of vengeance, which he sayth he hath ready against all vnbelieuers and disobedient, presently after he addeth, when your o-

bedience

bedience is fulfilled. For, if the reprobate did not through their own fault turne life into death, the Gospell should bee the power of God to saluation to all menne. Yet, because that when the same is hearde, the vngodlinesse of many openly breaking out, doth prouoke the wrath of God the more, to such it is necessary that the sauaour thereof should bee deadly. This is the summe, that Christ would assure his of the saluation profered vnto them in the Gospell, that they might assuredly looke for the same, as if hee himselfe should descend from heauen, as a witnesse of it: and againe to strike a feare into the contemners, least they should thinke that they might freely scorne at the ministers of the worde, both which were very necessary. For because that incomparable treasure of life is proposed vnto vs in earthly vessels, 1. Cor. 4. 7. If the authority of the outward doctrine were not thus sanctified vnto vs, the credit of the same would decay almost euery moment. Again, the vngodly doe so boldly sette against it, because they thinke they haue to doe with men. Therefore Christ declareth that by the preaching of the Gospell is reuealed vpon earth, what the iudgement of God shall bee in heauen, and the assurance of life and death cannot be had from otherwhere. This is a great honour, that wee are Gods interpreters to witnesse to the world his saluation. The great maiestie of the Gospell, which is called the ambassage of the mutuall reconciliation betweene God and men. To be short, it is a wonderfull comfort to godly mindes, when they know that the message of their saluation brought by a man of no reputation and mortall, is ratified before God. In the meane season let the vngodly raue as they please at the doctrine, which is preached by the commaundment of God: they shall feele at the length how truly and earnestly God hath threatened them by the mouth of men. Further, the godly teachers being furnished with this hope, may without feare testifie vnto themselues and others the grace of God, which giueth life, and with no lesse courage may they thunder against the obstinate contemners of their doctrine. Thus farre haue I plainly expounded the naturall sence of the words, so that nothing remaineth to be added, except the Roman Antichrist desiring to colour his tyranny, dare bee so bolde as no lesse wickedly then vnfaithfully to peruert this whole place. And though the light of the true interpretation, which I haue shewed, seemeth to bee sufficient to chase away his darknes: yet, least he should any thing hinder the Godly readers, I wil briefly answer his corrupt quarrels. First, he imagineth Peter to be called the foundation of the Church. But who seeth no: that he transferreth that to the person of the man, which was spoken of Peters faith? I grant that Peter and a rocke with the Grecians doe signifie one thing, but that the first is spoken after the phraze of the Athenians, & the other of the common language: but this diuersitie is not rashly set down by Math. but the gender is rather changed of purpose, that he might expresse some diuerse thing: & I doubt not but that Christe noted such a difference in his speech. Therefore Augustine doth wisely admonish, that it is not called a rock of Peter, but he is so called Peter or a rock, as we are all christians of Christ. Further, that I be not tedious, when that saying of Paul, 1. Cor. 3. 11. must be holden amongst vs for certaine & sure, that the church can haue no other foundation then in Christ alone, the Pope cannot deuise an other foundation without sacrilegious blasphemy. And certainly how much

we ought to detest this tyranny of the Pope euen in this one thing, it cannot be sufficiently exprest in any words, that for his sake the foundatiō of the church should be taken away, that the open gulfe of hell should swallow vp miserable soules. Adde further that this clause (as I touched before) doth not yet belong to the publike office of Peter, but onely amongst the holy stones of the temple, one place is giuen to him amongst the cheife. The titles that follow doe belong to the Apostolicall function. Whereof it followeth that nothing is spoken to Peter, which doth not belong also to the rest of his fellowes: for, if the dignitie of the Apostleship is cōmon amongst them, then whatsoeuer is annexed vnto the same, must also be common. But Christ speaketh vnto Peter only by name: for as one in the name of all had confessed Christ to be the sonne of God, so againe the speech is directed to one, which yet alik belōgeth to the other. Neither is that reason to be despised, which is alleaged by Cyprian and others, \S Christ in the person of one spake vnto all, that hee might commend the vniety of the Church. They except that he to whom this was peculiarly giuen, is to be preferred aboue all the rest. And this is as much, as if they should contend to haue him to be an Apostle rather then his fellowes. For the power of binding and loosing cannot bee taken away from the office of teaching and the Apostleship, rather then heate or light from the sunne. But if we yeeld that somewhat more was granted vnto Peter then to the rest, that hee should excell amongst the Apostles: yet the Papiſts do foolishly infer, that a primacy was giuen him, that he should be the viuer fall head of all the Church. For there is both a difference betweene dignitie and power, & also there is a difference of being in a higher degree of honor amongst a few, then to gather the whol world vnder his elbowes. And truly Christ laid not a greater burden vpon him then he was able to beare. He is commanded to be a porter of the kingdome of heauen, he is commanded by binding and loosing to dispence the grace of God, & to execute his iudgment vpon the earth: namely, so farre as the power of a mortall man doeth reach. Therefore whatsoeuer is giuen, must bee restrained to the measure of grace, wherewith hee is indued for the edifying of the Church; So that huge empyre which the Papiſts arrogate vnto him, falleth downe. But if there were no conſtrouersie nor strife but that Peter had it: yet this maketh nothing for the tyranny of the Pope. For the principle, which the papistes hold, no man in his right mind will grant them, that he re it was giuen to Peter, that he should passe it ouer as it were by right of inheritance to the \S shoulde come after him. Wherefore the Papiſts do make him liberall of an other mans. Further if there should be a continuall succession, yet the Pope getteth nothing thereby, vntill hee bee proued to be the lawfull successor of Peter. And how proueth he this: Because Peter died at Rome. As though Rome by the horrible murder of the Apostle gat her selfe the supremacy. But they pretend that hee was also Bishoppe there. How vaine that is I haue sufficiently shewed in my institution, from whence I had rather haue the whole tractation of this argument to be fetched, then heere with the trouble and wearines of the readers to vnfolde it againe. Yet, let this short clause be added: Although the Byshop of Rome were by law the successour of Peter, yet when by his owne falshood he shal depriue himselfe of so great an honour, whatsoeuer Christ gaue to the successours of Peter, shall profit him nothing

nothing. It is too well knowne that the Popes court is at Rome : but they can shew no marke of a Church there. And hee as much abhorreth the office of a Pastor, as he couetously striueth for his authoritie. And if Christ omitted nothing for the extolling of Peters heynes, yet hee was not so prodigall, as to bestow that honour vpon Apostates.

Mathevv. 16.

20. Then he charged his disciples that they should tel no mā that he was Iesus the Christ.

21. From that time forth Iesus begā to shew vnto his disciples that he must go vnto Ierusalē, and suffer many thinges of the Elders, and of the high Priests & of the Scribes, & be staine, and rise againe the third day.

22. Then Peter tooke him aside & began to rebuke him saying maister pitty thy selfe: this shall not be vnto thee. 23. Then he turned back, & said vnto Peter, get thee behind me Sathan thou art an offence vnto me: because thou vnderstandest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men.

24. Iesus the said to his disciples if any man will follow me, let him forsake himself, & take vp his crosse, & follow me. 25. For whosoever wil saue his life, shall lose it: & whosoever shall lose his life for my sake shal find it. 26. For what shal it profite a mā though he should win the whole world, if he lose his owne soule? or what shal a man giue for recompence of his soule? 27. For the son of mā shal come in the glory of his father with his angels and then shal hee giue to every man according to his deetes.

28. Verily I say vnto you, ther be some of them that stand here which shal not taste of death, till they haue seene the son of man come in his kingdome.

Marke 8.

30. And sharpely he charged them, that concerning him they should tell no man. 31. Then

hee beegan to teach them, that the sonne of man must suffer many things, and should be reprobued of the Elders, & of the high Priests, & of the Scribes, and be staine, & within three dayes rise againe. 32. And he spakethat thing plainly. Then Peter tooke him aside, and began to rebuke him. 33. Then he turned backe, & looked on his disciples, and rebuked Peter, saying, get thee behind me, Sathan: for thou vnderstandest not the things that are of God, but the things that are of men.

34. And hee called the people vnto him with his disciples, & sayd vnto them, whosoever wil follow me, let him forsake himself, and take vp his crosse, & follow me. 35. For whosoever will saue his life, shall lose it: but whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, & for the gospels, he shall saue it. 36. For what shal it profite a man, though he should win the whole world, if he lose his soule? 37. Or what shal a man giue for recompence of his soule? 38. For whosoever shalbe ashamed of me, & of my words amōg this adulterous & sinfull generation, of him shall the son of man be ashamed also when he cometh in the glory of his father with his holy angels.

Marke 9

Luke 9.

21. And he warned & commanded them, that they should tell that

no man: 22. Saying, the sonne of man must suffer many thinges and be reprobued of the Elders, and of the high Priests, and Scribes, & be slain and the thirde day rise againe. 23. And he said to them all, if any man will come after mee: let him denie himselfe, and take vp his crosse dayly, and follow me. 24. For whosoever will saue his life, shall lose it: and whosoever shall lose his life for my sake, the same shall saue it.

25. For what aduantage it a man, if he win the whole world, & destroy himselfe or lose himselfe. 26. For whosoever shalbe ashamed of me, and of my words, of him shall the sonne of man bee ashamed, when he shall come in his glory and in the glory of the father, and of the holy Angels.

27. And I tell you of a surety, there bee some standing here, which shal not taste of death, till they haue seene the kingdome of God.

Marke 9.

1. And he sayd vnto them, verily I say vnto you, that there bee some of them that stand heere, which shall not tast of death, till they haue seene the kingdome of God come with power.

Christ (after he had made a shewe of his glory to come) admonisheeth his disciples what they shoulde suffer, that they also might prepare themselves to beare the crosse: for the time of tryall was at hande: for the which hee knewe them farre vnmeet, except they should be furnished with a new force. But Christ bent himselfe chiefly to shew this, that his kingdome shoulde begin not with royall pompe, nor with great riches, nor with the pleasant allowance of the world, but with a reproachfull death. But there was nothing more difficult then to ouercome such an offence, especially if we consider how thoroughly they were now perswaded of their maister. for they imagined that hee should procure them an earthly felicitie. Therefore they were caried away with a vaine hope, earnestly gaping for that time, when Christ should sodenly reueale the glory of his kingdome. They had so little mind of the ignominie of the crosse, so that they thought it not likely that any thing shoulde befall vnto him to the contrary. This circumstance also was very hard, that he should be reiected of the Elders and the Scribes, who had the gouernement of the Church in their handes. Whereof it is easie to gather, how necessary this admonition was. But, because it could not be, but that the only mention of the crosse would greiuously trouble their weake mindes, presently he healeth the wound, and sayth that the third day hee shall rise againe from death. And certainly, when as in his crosse there only appeared the infirmities of the flesh, our faith shall find nothing wherein it shall rest or comfort it selfe, vntill it shall come to the resurrection, wherein the power of the spirit shineth forth. Therefore this course must be wisely holden by the ministers of the word, which desire to teach with profite, that they alwayes ioyne the glory of the resurrection, with the ignominie of death. But it is maruaile why Christ would not haue his Apostles to testifie of him, to whom hee had appointed that office before. For to what ende were they sent but that they should be preachers of the redemption, which depended vpon the coming of Christ? The answer is easie, if we remeber thole things which I then set downe: namely, that they were not created doctours, to declare the certaine and full testimonie of Christ: but onely that they might prepare scollers for a maister: that is, to make the which were ouerwhelmed with drowlines, apt to be taught and attentiu. Further, that the commandement was to last but for a time, and the preaching of Christ put an ende to the same. Now, because the time of his death drew neere, and they were not as yet ready to wtesse their faith: yea, their confession shoulde haue beene had in derision for the weakenes of their faith: therefore the Lord commandeth them silence vntill that others know that he is the conquerour of death, and that he induceth with more constancy.

22. Peter beganne to rebuke him: It is a signe of immoderate heate, that Peter vscth his maister thus: yet hee seemeth to beare some reuerence

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towards him, that he tooke him aside, and durst not reprove him before witnesses: yet his intemperancy is great, in that he warneth him, as if he were not well in his wittes, that he should spare himselfe. But rash zeale driueth men, yea and casteth them downe headlong so firme, that they doubt not to make God subiect to their pleasure. Peter iudgeth it to bee an absurd thing, that the Elders should crucifie the sonne of God, who should be the redeemer of the people, & that hee should be put to death, who was the authour of life. Therefore hee endeouureth to drawe Christ backe, that hee should not deliuer himselfe ouer to death. It is a fayre colour, but it is necessary that more credit bee giuen to the iudgement of Christ, then to Peters zeale, by what pretence soeuer it bee excusable. And heere wee are taught what those intentes, which are supposed to be good, are auileable before God. There is so great pride in men, that they thinke that they haue iniurie, and they complaine it that, which they thinke to be right, be not also accepted of God. So we see with what frowardnes the Papistes doe maintaine their deuotions, but while they so boldly allowe of themselves: God doth not onely reiect that which they thinke to be worthy of great prayse, but he also doth sharply condemne it of vngodly madnes. If truly the sense and iudgement of man should preuaile, Peters intent was godly, or at the least allowable. But Christ could not more sharply nor more contumeliously reiect him. What meaneth, I beseech you, his so sharpe an answer? who euery where behaued himselfe so meekely, that hee woulde not breake the brused reede, Esay 42. 3. How thundreth he now so vehemently against his chosen disciple? The reason is apparant, that in the person of one man he would restraine all men from flattering their owne affected zeale. For though it is harde to keepe vnder the pleasures of the flesh, for that they are like to wilde beastes: yet there is no beast so furious, as the wisdom of the flesh. Therefore Christ doth so sharply inueigh against the same, and beatech it downe as it were with an yron mallet, that wee might onely learne to bee wise out of the worde of God.

23. *Get thee behinde mee Sathan.* Some doe reason very fondly of this word *behinde*, as if Peter were commanded to follow, and not to goe before. For Luke before in the fourth Chapter declareth that the deuill was repulsed from the Lorde with the same wordes. And the worde *Hypage* signifieth to leaue off, from whence that latine word *Apage*, i. auoyde, is deriued. Christ therefore reiecteth his disciple far off, because that with his preposterous zeale he plaid Sathans pranckes. Neither doth he simply call him aduersary, but he calleth him deuill, in token of greate detestation. The reason is to bee noted, which is presently added, *Thou art an offence vnto mee, because thou understandest the things that are of men, and not the things that are of God.* Peter was an offence to Christ, while hee opposed himselfe against his calling. Whereof it also appeareth howe men are made in their peruerse zeale. For while Peter endeououred to stoppe his maisters course, hee was not aduised of himselfe, but that hee would haue defrauded himselfe and all mankind of eternall saluation.

Therefore in one worde wee are taught, with what diligence that must bee auoyded, whatsoeuer it bee that draweth vs from the obedience.

of God. And Christ openeth the fountaine of all this mischief, when he saith, that Peter sauoureth the things which are of menne. Therefore least the heauenly iudge cast off vs and our endeouours to the deuill, let vs learne not to be tyed to our owne iudgement, but obediently to imbrace that which the Lorde alloweth. Now let the Papistes goe, and extoll their owne deuices vppe to the skie: they shall feele at length, when they shall come before the celestiall tribunall seate, what that boasting shall preuaile, which Christe pronounceth to be deuilish. And for vs, let vs not desire otherwise to be wise then from the mouth of God, except wee would willingly shutte the way of saluation against our selues with deadly barres.

24. *Iesus then sayde to his disciples.* Because that Christe sawe Peter abhorre the Crosse, and knew that all others had the same affection, hee doeth generally entreate of bearing the Crosse, : neither teacheth hee the twelue alone, but layeth the same lawe vpon all the godly. Wee hadde almost the like sentence in matthew 10. 28. But there the Apostles onely were admonished of the persecution, which remained for them as soone as they shoulde begonne to discharge their function: but here he teacheth the common exercise of all younglings, and as it were entreth into the firste principles, all them that will professe the Gospell. And sayeth expressly, *If any manne will follow me,* that hee mighte refell Peters imagination. For hee proposing himselfe an example of denyall of himselfe and of patience to euery manne, hee declareth that hee must suffer, that which Peter thought vnmeete for his person. Furthermore, hee inuited all the members of his body to followe him. For so ought the wordes to be vnderstoode, If any manne will be my disciple, let him forsake himselfe, take vppe his Crosse, and follow mee, or let him frame himselfe after my example. And the meaning is, that none canne be accounted for Christes disciples, but they which are true followers of him, and are ready to runne in the same race.

Further, he prescribeth a short rule of imitation, that we might know in what thing hee especially requireth that we should be like vnto him: and that consisteth in two poyntes, in denyall of our selues, and in willinge bearing of the crosse. This denyall reacheth farre: namely, that we denying our owne wisdom, and forsaking all the affections of the flesh, might be ready to be brought to nothing, so that God might liue and raigne in vs. Wee knowe how naturally menne are ouerwhelmed with a blinde loue of themselves, how much they are giuen to themselves, and how much they account of themselves. But if wee desire to enter into Christes schoole, it behoueth to beginne at that foolishnesse whereunto Paule exhorteth vs. 1. Corinthians 3. 18. Then to go forward to tame and to bring vnder all affections. Therefore hee preacheth of taking vppe of the Crosse: for though generally the life of all menne is subiect to common miseries: yet, because that God doeth peculiarly exercise his seruants, that hee might make them like vnto the image of his owne sonne, it is no meruaile that this lawe is sayd to be giuen to them. Also though God loadeth with the crosse as well he wicked as the good, yet none are sayde to beare the crosse, but they which doe willingly lay their shoulders vnder it: for though a seirce & vntamed horse beareth a rider, yet he taketh him not vp.

Therefore this is the patience of the faithfull, with a willing minde to beare the crosse. Luke addeth this woorde *daily*, which hath great force in it: for Christe declareth that there is no ende of our warfare, vntill wee shall depart out of this world. Therefore let this bee the daily meditation of the godly, when they haue borne many troubles, to prepare themselves to beare new.

25. *For who soeuer will saue his life.* A most apt consolation, that they truly shall finde life, which doe willingly suffer death for Christ: for Marke doth expressly prescribe vnto the faithfull this cause of death: and therefore it is to bee vnderstood in Matthew his words. For oft times it cometh to passe, that ambition or desperation driueth prophane men to contemne life, so that courageously they haste to death, but yet they profit not therby. Also the opposed threatening auaileth much to the shaking off of the drowisie sluggishnes of the fleische, when as he forewarneth the that are desirous of this present life, that they onely preuaile thus farre, that they shall lose the same. There is a contrariety betwene this temporall life and the eternall, as we taught before vpon the tenth chapter, from whence the readers may seeke for the rest.

26. *For what shall it profit a man, &c. if he lose his owne soule?* The worde *soule* is heere taken properly: for Christe admonisheth that the soule of man is not therefore created to enioy the worlde onely for a few dayes, but that at length it may attaine to that immortality in heauen as if he should haue said, how great is this sluggishnesse, & how beastly blockishnes is it, that the world so holdeth men bound vnto it, and ouerwhelmeth them, that they consider not to what end they were borne, and haue an immortall soule giuen vnto them, that the race of this earthly life being finished, they should liue for ever in heauen? And all men eruly doe confesse that the soule is more worth then all the riches and pleasures of the world: but in the meane season the sense of the flesh doth so blind them, that wittingly and willingly they cast their soules into destruction. Therefore, least the world should enchaunt vs with her baytes, let vs consider in our minde the excellency of our soule: which if it be earnestly considered, doth easily dispel the vaine imaginations of an earthly felicie.

27. *For the sonne of man shall come.* That the former doctrine may the better sinke into our minds, christ setteth before their eyes the iudgement to come: for that this transitory life may become vile vnto vs, it is necessary for vs to bee touched with an earnest feeling of the heauenly: The slownesse and sluggishnes of our minde hath need to bee holpe and stirred vp to looke vp into heauen. Therefore Christ citeth the faithfull to his trybunall, that they might continually thinke that they liue for no other cause, but to aspyre to that blessed life, which shall be reuealed at that day. And the warning tendeth to this purpose, that we might know that they strue not in vaine, to whome the confession of their faith is more deare and precious then their life: as if Christe should haue sayd, Cast your liues into my hand and keeping without feare: for I will shew my selfe at length the auenger, who will at length restore you againe perfectly, though you seeme for a time to perish.

Hee mentioneth the glory of the father and the Angelles, least his disciples shoulde iudge of the kingdome after his present face or shewe,
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for as yet hee was base and despised, being hid vnder the habite and shape of a seruant. Therefore he promisseth to be farre otherwise, when hee shall come to be the Iudge of the world. Further, those wordes which Marke and Luke haue more, the readers shall finde expounded in the tenth Chapter of Mathew: Also I haue spoken sufficiently otherwhere of the reward of workes. This is the sum of it: as oft as there is a rewarde promised to good workes, it doth not oppose the merite of them against the free righteousnes of faith, neyther doth it theve the cause of saluation, but onely encourage the faithfull to the study ofswelldoing while they are certaine that they labour not in vaine. Wherefore these two do very well agree, we are iustified freely, because we are accepted of God besides our desert: and yet that he of his owne free wil and pleasure bestoweth a reward not due vnto our workes.

28. Verily I say vnto you. Because the Disciples might yet doubt amongst themselves, when that day should be, the Lord stirreth them vp with a neerer hope: namely, that he will shortly giue a shewe or token of his glory to come. Wee know how true the common prouerbe is, in that which is desired hast it selfe seemeth to make delay: but it is found most true, especially amongst vs, while our saluation is deferred to the comming of Christ. The Lord therefore that hee might in the meane season refresh his disciples, hee proposeth vnto them for their confirmation a time in the meane season. as if hee shoulde haue said, If it seeme to long for you to waite for my comming, I will sooner prenet the same. for before you shal die, that kingdome of God shall be euident before your eyes, of the hope whereof I command you to depend. This is the naturall sense of the wordes. For that which some doe imagine of Iohn is but a fancy. By the comming of the kingdom of God is meant the manifestation of the heauenly glory, which Christ began at his resurrection, and shewed it more fully, by sending the holy Ghost, and by working maruailous workes: for in these beginnings he gaue his disciples a tast of the newnesse of the heauenly life, when by true and certaine tryals they might know him, that he sat at the right hand of his father.

Math. 17.

1. And after sixe dayes, Iesus tooke Peter & James, and Iohn his brother, and brought the vp into an high moutaine a part.
2. And was transfigured before them: and his face did shine as the sunne, and his clothes were as white as the light.
3. And behold, there appeared vnto them Moses, and Elyas, talking with him.

4. Then

Marke 9.

2. And sixe dayes after Iesus took Peter & James and Iohn, & brought them vp into an high mountain out of the way alone, and hee was transfigured before them:
3. And his raiment did shine, and was very white as snow, so white as no fuller can make vpon the earth.
4. And there appeared vnto them Elias with Mo

ses,

Luke 9.

28. And it came to passe about an 8. dayes after those wordes, that hee tooke Peter, and Iohn, and James, and went vp into a mountaine to pray.
- 29 And as he praid, the fashion of his countenance was changed and his garment was white, and glistered.
30. And behold, two men talked with him, which were Moses and Elias.
- 31 Which appeared in glory, and tolde of his departing, which

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4. Then answered Peter, & sayde to Iesus, master it is good for vs to be here: if thou wilt let vs make heere three tabernacles: one for thee, & one for Moses, and one for Elias.

5. While hee yet spake, behold a bright cloud shadowed them: and behold there came a voice out of the cloud saying: this is my beloued sonne, in whome I am well pleased, heare him.

6. And when the disciples heard that, they fell on their faces, and were sore afraid.

7. Then Iesus came and touched them, and said, arise, & be not afraid.

8. And when they lifted vp their eyes, they saw no man save Iesus onely.

ses, and they were talking with Iesus.

5. Then Peter answered and sayd to Iesus: Master it is good for vs to be here let vs make also three tabernacles: one for thee: & one for Moses, and one for Elias.

6. Yet he knew not what he said: for they were afraid

7. And there was a cloud that shadowed them, and a voyce came out of the cloude, saying, This is my beloued sonne, heare him.

8. And sodently they looked round about, and sawe no more any manne save Iesus onely with them.

he should accomplish at Hierusalem.

32. But Peter and they that were with him, were heavy with sleepe, and when they awoke they saw his glory and two men standing with him.

33. And it came to passe, as they departed from him, Peter said to Iesus, master, it is good for vs to be here: let vs therefore make 3 tabernacles, one for thee, & one for Moses, and one for Elias, & wist not what he said.

34. While hee thus spake there came a cloud, and overshadowed them, and they feared when they were entring into the cloud.

35. And there came a voice out of the cloud, saying, This is my beloued sonne, heare him.

36. And when the voice was past, Iesus was found alone

First, it is to be considered for what purpose Christ tooke vpon him the heavenly glory for so short a time, & had but onely three of his disciples as witnesses of this strange sight. The opinion of some, that it was done to that end, that they might be strengthened against that temptation, which was now at hand, by reason of his death, is not probable to me. For why should hee haue deprivied others of that remedie. nay, why doth hee expressly forbidde them, that they should not declare what they had seene, before his resurrection: but because the profit of the vision should appeare after his death? Therefore I doubt not but that Christ would declare that he was not drawne to his death against his will, but went willingly to the same, that hee might offer vp a sacrifice of obedience to his father. This knowledge came not into the disciples mindes, vntill Christ rose againe. Neither was it necessary for them at that time to conceiue that diuine power of Christ, which they should know conquering vpon the crosse but they are taught against another time aswell for their owne sakes as for ours least the infirmite of Christ should offend any man, as though it were by necessity or constraint, that hee shoulde suffer. For it is euident that it was easie for Christ to exempt his body from death, as to adorne it with heavenly glory. Therefore wee be taught that hee was subiect to death, because his will was so: and that he was crucified, because he offered himselfe. For that same flesh, which being offered vpon the crosse lay in the graue, could haue bin free from death & the graue, when as it had now bene partaker of the celestiall glory. But wee are also taught, that so long as Christ was conuersant in the worlde in the shape

of a seruant, and that his maiestie was hid vnder the infirmitie of the flesh, nothing was withdrawne from him: because that he humbled himselfe of his own free will: but now the resurrection taketh away the vaile, wherewith his power was hidden for a time. Further, it was sufficient for the Lord to chuse three witness: because that by the lawe that number was prescribed for proouing any matter, Deut 17. 6. The difference of the time ought not to offend vs. Math. and Mar. do number sixe whole dayes which passed betweene: But Luke, saying that it was done almost eight dayes after, cōprehendeth aswell that day wherein Christ spake that, as the day wherein he was transfigured. Therefore we see that they do agree very well in one sence vttered in diuers woords.

2. *And was transfigured before them.* Luke sayeth that this came to passe, when hee prayed: and by the circumstance of the place and the time it may bee gathered that he prayed for this that he obtained, that a visible shew or demonstration of his godhead might be reuealed in the brightnes of a new shape: not that hee had need to aske by prayer of any other, for that he had not, or that the will of the father was to bee doubted of. but that in the whole course of his humilitie, if hee did any thing as God hee referred it to his father: and his purpose was to stirre vs vp by prayers. But in this transfiguration the disciples did not see Christe altogether in that excellency, that hee is in now in heauen, but hee onely gaue them such a taste of his great glory, as they were able to abide. Then his face shone as the sunne: but now it farre exceedeth the brightnesse of the sunne: Then an vnwonted brightnesse shone in his apparrell, now without apparrell the maiesty of his Godhead shineth throughout his whole body. So God in times past appeared vnto the fathers, not such as he was in himselfe, but as they were able to abide the beames of his great brightnesse: for Iohn sayth, 1. Io. 3. 2. that the faithfull shall not see him as hee is before that they bee made like vnto him.

Now there is no cause for any man to dispute subtilly of the whitenesse of his garments, or of the brightnes of his face, when as this was not a full reuealing of his celestiaall glory: but he partly gaue a taste in figures, of that which they were not yet able wholly to conceiue.

3. *Moses and Elias appeared vnto them.* It is demaunded, whether Moses and Elias were verily present, or that the disciples saw onely the likenesse of them, as the Prophets did oftentimes see the visions of thinges absent. Though the matter bee disputable on both sides (as men say) yet it is more probable in my iudgement, that they were brought in deede into that place. Neither is there any absurditie in it, seeing that God hath both bodies and soules in his hand, at his pleasure to restore the dead to life for a time.

And Moses and Elias rose not then for themselues: but that they might bee present there with Christe. If any manne demaunde againe how the Apostles knewe Moses and Elias, whome they hadde neuer seene: The answer is easie: for sith God brought them to appeare, hee gaue them also signes and Markes whereby they might bee knowne amongst them. And this was by an extraordinary manner of reuelation, that they certainly knew them to be Moses and Elias.

But why these two appeared rather then any other of the company of the holy fathers, that reason ought to satisfie vs, that the lawe and the prophets had no other purpose nor end but Christ. For it made greatly for our sayth, that Christ came not with out testimony, but was before commended of God. Neither doth that reason displease me, which was wont to bee brought, that Elias was especially taken, to represent all the Prophetes : for though hee left nothing in writing, yet was hee the chiefe next vnto Moses : he restored the religion of God, which was corrupted : yea, hee was without comparifon an especiall auenger of the lawe and true holynesse, being nowe almoste extinguished. That they appeare with Christe, and talke together is a signe of consente. But what their talke was Luke onely reporteth : namely, that they talked of the manner of his departure, which remained for him at Ierusalem. Further this must not bee restrained to their priuate persons, but rather to that office, which was before enioyned them. For it was the will of God, though they hadde beene nowe long dead, and had performed the course of their calling, that they should yet againe confirme with their voyce that which they had taught in their life : that wee might knowe that the saluation promised to the holy fathers in the sacrifice of Christe is common to vs. Nowe, when as the olde Prophets prophesied of the death of Christe : hee (which was the eternall wildome of God) sate in the secrete throne of his glory : Whereof it followeth that he was not to bee clothed with flesh subiect vnto death, but that hee freely submitted himselfe thereunto.

4. *Maister, it is good for vs to be here.* Luke reporteth that Peter sayde so when Moses and Elias were gone : whereby wee gather that hee was a frayde least that by their departure they shoulde loose that sweete and blessed sighte. And though it is no meruaile that Peter was so delighted with that pleasaunt sight, that all other things being despised, the onely enioying of that satisfied him, as it is said in the Psal. 16. 11. That the fulnesse of ioy is the countenance of GOD : yet this was a preposterous desire of his : that hee vnderstoode not the ende of the vision : then that hee foolishly made the seruantes equall with the maister : thirdly hee erred, when hee woulde make transitorie Tabernacles for menne to dwell in, which were already receiued into the celesti- all and Angelicall glory. I say hee vnderstoode not the ende of the vision. For, when hee heard Moses and Elias say, that the time of the death of Christe was at hande, as a manne amazed at that sight, which was but momentary, hee dreamed the same to be eternall.

What meaneth this, that the kingdome of Christ should be by this meanes included into so narrow a reumth of twentie or thirte foote? where was the redemption of the whole Church? Where was the fellowshippe of eternall saluation? This also was a very peruerse iudgement, to imagine Elias and Moses to bee fellowes with the Sonne of God : as if it were not necessary that all menne shoulde bee brought vnder, that hee alone may bee extolde. Now, if Peter is content with his lotte, why doth he thinkethem to haue neede of any earthly supplies, at the sight of whom he thinketh himselfe so happy? Therefore two of the Euangelistes doe very well note that he knew not what he said.

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Marke addeth that cause for that they were affrayd. Neither was it the will of God, that the Apostles should at any time profit further, then to behold the Godhead of his sonne for a moment, as it were in a liuely glasse. Afterwardes in successe of time he shewed them the fruite of it, and corrected their want of iudgement. Therefore Marke declareth that Peter being astonished, spake as a man altogether amazed.

5. Behold a bright cloud. A cloud was put before their eyes, that they might know that they are not yet fitt to behold the brightnesse of the heavenly glory: for when as the Lord gaue some tokens of his presence, he added withall some vailes, to suppress the boldnes of mens wisdom: so now that he may instruct his disciples in humilitie, he withdraweth from their eyes the beholding of the celestiall glory. Also this admonition doth appertaine to vs, that we should not desire, to breake into those secretes, which passe our senses: but rather that euery manne doe soberly containe himselfe within the measure of his faith. Further, this cloud should be in stead of a bridle to vs, least that our curiositie become more wanton then is meete. The disciples also are admonished that they must returne to their accustomed warfare, and that they must not promise themselves a triumph before the time.

There came a voice out of the cloud. And this also is worthy to be noted, that the voice of God sounded out of the cloude, but there was neither body nor face seene. Therefore let vs remeber that warning that Moses gaue, Deut. 4. 15. God appeared not in any visible shape, least that we being deceiued, should think him to be like vnto man. It is true that the holy fathers in times past saw sundry shapes, whereby they might know God: yet he alwayes abstained from such shewes as might yeeld any occasion or prouocation to make Idolles. And truly, sith the minds of men are bent more then is meete they should be, to grosse fantasies, it were hurtful to put oyle to the lampe. This was a most notable manifestation of the glory: whē as he calleth vs vnto him out of the cloud with his owne voice, how absurd it is for vs to go about to make him to be present before our eyes in a stock of wood or stone? Therefore let vs learne by faith alone, & not with fleshly eyes to pierce to that light, which we cannot come neare, wherein God doth dwell. But the voyce came out of the cloude, so as the disciples knowing that it came frō God, might receiue the same with such reuerence as was meete.

This is my sonne. I doe willingly subscribe to their iudgement, which thinke that here is a secrete opposition betweene Moses, Elias and Christe, as if that Christ shoulde commaunde his disciples to bee content with the onely sonne: for that name sonne is Emphaticall or very forcible, whereby he is extolled above the seruants. Also Christe is here adorned with two titles no lesse honourable then profitable to our faith, namely, welbeloued Sonne, and also Maister. In that the father calleth him beloued, in whom he is well pleased, hee declareth him to be the Mediatour in whom hee reconcileth the world to himselfe. When he commaundeth to heare him, he maketh him the chiefe and only doctour of his Church. For when as it was his purpose to note him from all others, as by these words we doe truly and properly gather, by nature he is his only sonne, in like maner it is to be obserued, that he alone is beloued of the father, that he is made the only doctour, that all authoritie might rest in his power.

If any manne will except against this, asking whether God loueth Angels, and menne, or no : the answer is easily made, the fatherly loue of G O D which hee beareth to Angelles and to menne, commeth from that fountaine. Neither is the sonne therefore beloued of the father, that other creatures shuld be hated : but that hee might impart with them, that which was proper to himselfe. Though the estate of vs and of the Angelles is diuers. For these were neuer estranged from God, that they shoulde neede a reconciler : but we by sinne were enemies, vntill Christe reconciled him vnto vs. Yet that is alwayes certaine that God is mercifull to both, so as he embraceth vs in Christ, for the very Angels could not be ioyned to God without a head. Now, when as the father speaketh heere, and distinguisheth himselfe from the sonne, it followeth that they are distincte in persons, though the essence and maiesty is one, and the same.

Heare him, I shewed before that the Church is called backe by this word to the only doctour Christ, that it might depend only of his mouth. For though Christ came to confirme the law and the Prophets, yet he so holdeth the chiefe roume, that by the brightnesse of his Gospell, he swalloweth vpe those sparkes which shone in the olde Testament : for hee is the sonne of righteousness, at whose comming it appeared to be full day. And this is the reason why the Apostle sayeth in the first chapter to the Hebrewes, God who at sundry times, & in diuers maners in old time spake by the prophets, spake in these last dayes by his beloued sonne. Furthermore at this day Christ is no lesse heard in the lawe & the Prophets then in the Gospell, that the authority of a maister, might wholly rest vpon him, euen as he challengeth the same to himselfe alone, *Matthew 23. 8.* And hee keepeth not his prerogatiue safe, except that all mens tongues keepe silence. Wherefore it is necessary, that whatsoeuer menne haue deuised, shoulde be ouerthrowne and cast downe, that he might keepe vs vnder his doctrine. And he doth daily send forth doctours, but such as doe purely & faithfully deliuer that which they should learne of him, and not such as doe mixe the Gospell with their owne additions. In summe, no man is a faithfull teacher of the Church, except that he be both Christes disciple, and also bring others to him to be taught.

6. *And when the disciples heard this.* It was Gods will to strike the disciples with this feare, that hee might the better imprinte the remembrance of the vision in their hearts. In the meane season we see how great the infirmities of our flesh is, which is so afrayde at the hearing of the voyce of God. The cause why the wicked doe either scorne at it, or contemptuously despise it, is, because God doth not effectually touch them. But it is necessary that the Maiestie of God should cast vs downe as soone as wee feele him. But Christe afterwarde doeth his office, raising vp them that are throwne downe : for therefore came he downe to vs, that by his direction the faithfull might without teare appeare in the presence of God : and his Maiesty which otherwise consumeth all fleshe, shall be no more terrible vnto them.

Furthermore, hee doeth not onely comfort them in woorde, but also confirmeth them by touching. That afterwarde it is sayde, that they saw onely Christe, tendeth to shewe that the glory was tied to the lawe and the

the Prophets but for a time, that onely Christ might continue glorious. For if we will vse the helpe of Moses rightly, he must not be rested vpon, but we must apply our diligence, that by him wee may bee led as it were by the hande vnto Christ, whose minister he is together with all the rest. This place also may be applied to the ouerthrowing of their superstitions, which doe not onely sette Christ equall with the Prophets and Apostles, but doe so ioyne him with their common halfeaintes, as if that hee were as any one of their number. But the graces of God doe shine in his Saintes to a far other ende, then that they should forceably take vnto themselves part of the honour due vnto Christ. And the fountaine of this error might haue bene noted in the Disciples themselves: for as long as they were feared with the maiestie of God, their mindes wandered in seeking after men: but when Christ had comfortably raysted them vp, he onely was scene of them. For if we haue that comfort in vs, wherewith Christ taketh away our feares, all those foolish affections which doe draw vs hether & thether, shall vanish away.

Mathew 17.

Marke 9.

Luke 9.

9. And as they came downe from the Mountaine Iesus charged them saying: Shewe the vision to no man, until the sonne of man rise againe from the dead.

10. And his Disciples asked him saying: Why then say the Scribes, that Elyas must first come?

11. And Iesus answered, & sayd vnto them: certainly Elias must first come, and restore all things.

12. But I say vnto you that Elias is come already, & they knewe him not: but haue done vnto him what soeuer they would: likewise shall also the Sonne of manne suffer of them.

13. Then the Disciples perceived that he spak vnto them of Iohn Baptist.

9. And as they came downe from the mountaine, hee charged them that they should tell no man what they had seene, saue when the Sonne of man were risen from the dead againe.

10. So they kept that matter to themselves, and demanded one of another, what the rising againe from the dead should meane?

11. Also they asked him saying: Why say the Scribes, that Elias must first come?

12. And he answered, and saide vnto them: Elias verily shall come first, and restore all things: and as it is written of the sonne of man hee must suffer many thinges, and bee set at nought.

13. But I say vnto you, that Elias is come (and they haue done vnto him, what soeuer they would) as it is written of him.

36. And they kept it close, and tolde no manne in those daies any of those thinges which they had seene.

9. *And as they came downe from the Mountaine.* We haue shewed before why the time was not as then fully come for the publishing of that vision. And truly there shoulde haue beene no credite giuen to the disciples, except that Christe had giuen at his resurrection a more euident token of his glory. But after that the diuine power shewed it selfe openly, that momentanie beholding of his glory began to haue place, that it might euidently appeare euen when he was most abased, that yet his Godhead remained sound with him, though it was couered vnder the vaile of the flesh. Therefore he doth not without cause command his disciples to hold their peace, vntill he should arise from death.

10. *And his Disciples asked him, saying.* Alloone as there was mention made of the resurrection: the disciples doe thinke that the kingdome of Christ should begin: for so doe they expound this saying, that the worlde should know him to be the Messias. For they imagined another matter of the resurrection then Christ meant, as appeareth by Marke: *They disputed amongst themselves, what the rising againe from the dead should meane.* It may be that that able began then to spring, which is holden at this day for a certaine Oracle amongst the Rabbines that the comming of the Messias should not be after one maner forfirst, it shold be meane and bafe: but shortly after his royall and kingly dignitie shoulde follow. And this errorr hath some colour of likelihoode in it, for it sprang of a true principle. The Scripture declarath that the Messias should come twise: for it promisseth that he should be a redeemer, that should with the sacrifice of himselfe wash away the sinnes of the world.

And to this purpose do belong those prophesies of Zach. 9. 9. Reioyce O Sion: Behold thy king commeth, poore, sitting vpon an Asse, &c. and of Esay's 53. Hee hath neither soume nor beutie, when wee see him: hee was without fournie, and like to a Leper, that we should not desire him. Then he proposeth him as a conquerour of death, who should make all things subiect vnto him. But wee see howe the Rabbines doe depraue the sincere doctrine of the scripture with their inuentions. And as all things were very much corrupted at the comming of Christ, so it is to be supposed that the people had this fanisie also amongst them. It hath beene shewed twise or thise how grosely they erred, about the person of Elias. It may be that they also meant maliciously and subtilly, vnder pretence of Elias to derogate from Christ. For when as Elias was promised as a forerunner to the Messias, who should prepare the way before him: it was easie for them to lay this prejudice vpon Christ, that hee came without Elias: euen as the deuill at this day enchauneth the Papistes almoste with the same subtiltie, that they should not looke for the day of iudgement, vntill that Elias and Enoch should appeare. It may verely bee supposed, that the Scribes had deuised this snare of purpose, that they might discredit Christe, as if hee wanted the cheife signe and note of the Messias.

11. *Certainely Elyas must come.* We haue shewed other where whereof this errorr sprang among the Iewes. For in restoring the decayed estate of the Church, Iohn Baptist shoulde bee like to Elias, and Malachy gaue that name also vnto him: that was rashly taken of the Scribes, as if that the same Elyas the Thesbite shoulde returne againe into the worlde. Now CHRISTE declareth that Malachie prophesied nothing in vaine, but that

that his prophesie was naughly wreasted to an other purpose, as if he shoulde haue said. the promise of the comming of Elias was true, & it was also fulfilled: but now haue the Scribes refused Elias, whose name only they doe obiect falsly against me. And the reformatio is attributed to the Baptist, not that he performed the same, but because that in a continuall course he delucred that to christ, as from hand to hand to be performed which he had begun. And because the Scribes had reiected Iohn without a cause, Christe admonisheth his disciples that there is no cause why they should be hindred with their crafty deceits: further, it must seeme no strange thing vnto the, if they take the same liberty to reiect the master, & they did before to reiect the seruant. And least any man should be troubled with the strangenes of the matter, the Lord declareth that they were both foretold in the Scriptures: namely that the redeemer of the world should be reiected of the false & vngodly teachers, as well as Elias his forerunner was.

Matth. 17.

Marke 9.

Luke 9.

14. And when they were come to the multitude, there came to him a certaine manne, and kneeled downe to him.

15. And said: master, haue pitty on my sonne, for he is lunatique, & is sore vexed: for oft times he falleth into the fire, and oft times into the water.

16. And I brought him to thy disciples, & they could not heale him.

17. Then Iesus answered, and sayd: O generation faithlesse and crooked, how long now shall I be with you? how long now shall I suffer you? bring him hither to me.

18. And Iesus rebuked the deuill, & he went out of him: and the child was

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14. And when hee came to his disciples, he sawe a great multitude about them, and the Scribes disputing with them

15. And straight way all the people when they beheld him, were amazed, and ranne to him, and saluted him.

16. Then he asked the Scribes, what dispute you among your selues?

17. And one of the company answered & sayd: maister, I haue brought my sonne vnto thee, which hath a dumme spirite.

18. And where soeuer hee taketh him, hee teareth him, and hee someth, and gnasheth his teeth, and pineth away, & I spake to thy disciples, that they should cast him out, and they could not.

19. Then hee answered him, and sayde, O faithlesse generation, how long now shall I suffer you? Bring him vnto me.

20. So they brought him vnto him: and as soone as the spirit saw him, he tare him, & hee fell down on the ground, wallowing and fuming.

21. Then hee asked his father: How long time is it since he hath bene thus? And hee sayde: of a child.

22. And oft times hee casteth him into the fire, and into the water, to destroy him: but if thou canst doe any thing, helpe vs, and haue compassion vpon vs.

23. And Iesus sayd vnto him: If thou canst belecue it, all things are possible to him that

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37. And it came to passe on the next day, as they came downe from the Mountaine, much people met him.

38. And behold, a man of the company cryed out saying: maister, I beseech thee behold my sonne: for he is all I haue.

39. And loe a spirite taketh him, and sodainly he cryeth, and he teareth him that he someth and with much payne departeth from him, when hee hath brused him.

40. Nowe I haue soughte thy disciples to caste him out, but they could not.

41. Then Iesus answered, and sayd: O generation faithlesse, & crooked, how long now shall I be with you, & suffer you? bring thy sonne hither.

42. And whiles he was yet comming, the deuill rent him, and tare him: and Iesus rebuked the

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beleueeth.

24. And straightwayes the father of the childe crying with teares, sayde: Lord I beleene, helpe my vnbeliefe.

25. When Iesus saw that the people came running together, hee rebuked the vncleane spirite, saying vnto him: Thou dumme & deafe spirit, I charge thee come out of him, and enter no more in to him.

26. Then the spirite cried, and rent him fore, and came out, & he was as one dead, in so much as many sayd, he is dead.

27. But Iesus tooke his hand and lift him vppe, and he arose.

vncleane spirite, and healed the childe, and deliuered him to his father,

43. And they were amazed at the mighty power of God.

Because that Marke is fuller, and setteth downe the seuerall poyntes plainly, wee will follow the course of wordes set downe by him. And first he doth euidently declare wherefore Christe became now sharper then he was woonte to be, whereas he exclaimeth against the Iewes, as people vnworthily to bee any longer borne withall for their frowarde malice. Wee know howe gently hee was woonte to vse them, yea though they dealt importunately with him. The father here sueth for his onely sonne: very great necessitie vrgeth him, modestly and humbly he sueth to Christe for his mercy. Why then is he of a sodaine more earnest against them, then he was accustomed, and saith that they are not to bee borne? Because the reason of so great seueritie is not set downe by Matthew and Luke, some interpreters were deceiued, which thought that Christe rebuked here either his disciples, or the childes father. But if wee doe well consider the whole course of the history, as it is set downe by Marke, it shall be easie to iudge that Christ was rather offended at the malice of the Scribes, then so roughly to reprove the ignorant and the weake. When as in the absence of Christ the lunatique child had been brought forth in the midst amongst them, it seemed to be a very plausible occasion for the Scribes to quarrell, & they willingly tooke it. They are therefore earnest with the disciples, that if they haue any power, they should shew it in healing the childe. It is likely that the disciples tryed, and could not bring their purpose to passe: so the Scribes boast as conquerours, and they doe not onely scorne at the disciples, but they quarrell against Christ, as if that his power were decayed in their person. But this was a most abominable vngodlines, ioyned with like ingratitude, maliciously to suppress so many myracles, whereby they hadde learned howe great power Christe had: for of set purpose they endeouored to quench the light set before their eyes. Wherefore Christ exclaimeth against them not without cause, that he can beare no longer with them, and calleth them a faithlesse and crooked nation: for they shoulde by to many former instructions haue at least profited thus farre, not to seeke occasion of quarrelling.

MAR. 14. Hee sawe a great multitude. No doubt but the Disciples were accounted as iesting stocks, as the enemies to the truth are woonte with their braggies to make much, euen of nothing. The Scribes therefore by
their

their troublesome dealing, layd the disciples open to be scorned of many. And yet it seemeth that so ne were not euill affected: for as soone as they see Iesus, they salute him: yea, his presence pulleth down the intolencie of the Scribes, in so much that being demanded whereof they disured they held their peace.

17. *Master, I haue brought my sonne.* Mathew noteth another kinde of disease then Marke doth: for he saith that the man was lunatike. Yet they do both agree in these two points, that he was dumbe, and at certaine times was driuen into rages. But they are called lunatike, which either at the wane of the Moone haue the falling sicknes, or are troubled with a giddinesse. Neither doe I hold that which Chrysostome imagineth, that this name was inuented by the subtiltie of Sathan, that he might blot with infamie the good creatures of God: for certaine experience teacheth that these diseases doe increase and decrease according to the course of the Moone: yet this letteth not, but that Sathan may adde his forces to such naturall means. Therefore I thinke that this man was not deafe and dumbe by nature, but that his tongue and eares were possessed by Sathan. Furthermore, when as the weakenesse of the braine and sinewes made him subiect to the falling sicknesse there was a greater mischiefe added by Sathan himselfe. Heereof it came to passe, that he euery where sought his owne destruction, then, that he lay all to torne, that he falleth downe as one without life, and like vnto a dead man. And heereby wee learne howe many means Sathan hath to hurt vs, except he bee driuen away by the hand of God. As many infirmities as there are of the flesh and of the soule, which wee thinke to be innumerable so many dartes doe they yelde to Sathan to annoy vs. Therefore we are more then blockish, if so miserable a condition of ours, doe not prouoke vs to prayers. And heerein doth the incomparable goodnesse of God shewe itselfe, that when we are beset with so diuers dangers, yet hee preferueth vs vnder his defence: especially if wee consider with how great a desire our enemy is inflamed to destroy vs. But this comfort should also come into our minde, that Christ came to bridle his madnesse, and that wee doe therefore remaine safe amongst so many dangers, because our heavenly medicine is of more force then all our dangers. The circumstance of the time maketh also to this purpose: the father answereth that his sonne hath bene thus miserably tormented euen from his youth. If Sathan haue so great libertie giuen him vpon that tender age, what shoulde not wee feare, which by our owne sinnes doe make our selues meete for such deadly blowes, and which doe minister weapons to our enemy, and vpon whom hee could enter as into his owne right, if his desire were not restrained and ouerthrowne by his wonderfull power.

MAT. 17. *O generation faithlesse,* Though Christ seemeth to direct his speech to the father of the lunatike, yet it is not to be doubted, but that he had respect to the Scribes, as I taught a little before. For it is certaine that the simple and weak were not rebuked, but they which being inclosed in their owne malice, doe stubbornly resist God. Therefore Christe denieth them as worthy to be borne with all any more by him, and threatneth that he will shortly diuorce himselfe from them. But nothing woorse can fall out, then that hee should forsake vs.

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And this is no small reproofe, that they should so proudly refuse the grace of his visitation, where is also to be noted that men are to be handled diuersly, euery man according to his inclination: for when as hee allureth them that are apt to be taught with all gentlenesse he beareth with the weake, and doth also moderately stirre vp the slow, he spareth not these crooked serpents, whom he seeth not to be cured with any remedies.

MAR. 20. *As soon as the spirit saw him.* That the deuill rageth more vehemently vpon the man then he was wont, it is no maruell: for the nearer the grace of Christ sheweth it selfe, and the more effectually it worketh, the more outrageously Sath in fareth: for he is stirred vp with the presence of Christ, as with the sound of a trumpet, and he moueth what tumults hee can, and stirreth as much as he is able. It behooueth vs to meditate this before the time, least that our faith be troubled, as oft as at the appearance of the grace of Christ, this our enemy ariseth against vs with more violence then hee was wont. Yea, another thing moreouer is heere to be noted, the true beginning of our healing is to be so thoroughly afflicted, that we shall be but little from death. And also, that the Lord kindleth a torch or light at the furious rage of Sathan, to shewe forth his grace: for when as men were astonied at that horrible sight, thereby the power of Christ which presently followed, might bee the better discerned of them.

21. *Of a child.* Heereby wee gather that this was not inflicted as a punishment for the sinnes of the man: but was the secret iudgement of God. It is certaine that the infantes when they come first out of the wombe of their mother, are not innocent before God and guiltlesse, but Gods scourges haue some time secret causes, and that for the tryall of our obedience. Neither do wee otherwise yeelde that honour that is due to God, then if wee doe reuerently and modestly adore his iustice, euen when hee is hidden from vs. If any man desire to know more matter, he may search in that place of the ninth chapter of Iohn: neither this man hath sinned, nor his parents.

22. *And if thou canst doe any thing, helpe vs.* Wee see howe little honour hee yeeldeth vnto Christ: for hee thinking him to bee some Prophet, whose power is finite within measure, hee commeth vnto him doubting. But the first foundatiō of faith is to embrace the immeasurable power of God. Also it is the first entrance to prayers, to extoll the same aboue all lettes, so that wee may be certainly perswaded that wee pray not in vaine. And because that this man thought of Christ no otherwise then as of a man, his false opinion is corrected for it behooueth that he should beleue, that he might bee capable and fit to receiue the grace desired. Christe doeth not plainly reprove the man in his answer: but turning backe againe vpon him an other way that which hee had spoken euill, hee sheweth him his fault, and teacheth him to seeke a remedy. For this exception: *If thou canst beleue*, is as much as if he should haue said: Thou desirest me to helpe thee if I can doe any thing: But thou shalt finde in mee a fountaine of power, that cannot be drawn drie, if that thou bringest a measure of faith large enough. Heereof may bee gathered a profitable doctrine which generally belongeth vnto vs all. The Lord is not the let, that the great boundfulness of his goodnesse sheweth not from him vnto vs: but it must bee impu-

imputed to the narrow straites of our faith, that it stilleth downe to vs as it were drop after drop : nay, oft times we cannot feele a drop, because that our vnbeleife stoppeth vp our heart. But in vaine would some subtle men shew theselues here, as if Christ would teach, that man could belecue of himselfe, when as he had no other purpose, then to cast vpon men the fault of their owne weakenes: so oft as they doe weaken the power of God by their owne vnbeleife.

23. *All things are possible to him that beleueth.* It is not to be doubted but that Christ taught that the fulnes of al good things was giuen vnto him of his father and that any kind of helpe cannot be hoped for from him alone otherwise, then as from the very hand of God, as if he should haue sayd : onely beleue, & thou shalt obtaine. But how faith shall obtaine any thing, we shall see a little after.

24. *I beleue Lord.* Hee sayth that he beleueth, and yet confesseth himselfe to be an vnbeleuer, though these two seeme to be contray, yet ther is no man which hath not the trial of it in himselfe. for where as there is not a perfect faith any where, it followeth that they are in part vnbeleuers: yet so God of his mercie pardoneth vs, and accounteth vs faithfull for that little portion of faith. Yet it behoueth vs, diligently to shake of the dregs of infidelitie which doe stickie in vs, and to strue with them, and to craue of the Lord that he would correct thes: and as oft as we are in this conflict to flie to him to helpe vs. If we well consider what is giuen to euery man, it shall easily appeare that there are very fewe that haue an excellent faith, few that haue a meane faith, and that the most haue but a small measure.

Mathew. 17

Mar. 9.

Luke 17

19. Then came the disciples to Iesus apart, and sayd: Why could not wee cast him out?

20. And Iesus sayd vnto them: Because of your vnbeleife: for verily I say vnto you, if ye haue faith as much as is a graine of mustard seed, ye shall say vnto this mountain, remove hence to yonder place, and it shall remove: and nothing shall be vnpossible vnto you.

21. Howbeit this kind goeth not out but by prayer and fasting.

28. And when he was come into the house, his disciples asked him secretly why could not wee cast him out?

29. And hee sayd vnto them, This kinde can by no other means come forth, but by praier and fasting.

5. And the Apostles sayd vnto the Lord: increase our faith.

6. And the Lord said: if yee hadde faith as much as a graine of mustard seede, and should say vnto this Mulberry tree, plucke thy selfe vp by the rootes, and plant thy selfe in the sea, and it should euen obey you.

19. Then came the Disciples. The Disciples do maruayle that the power which once they hadde is taken from them, when as they depriued themselves thereof through their owne faulte. Therefore Christe assigneth this want to their vnbeleife, and that sentence which hee touched before, he rehearseth againe, and prosecuteth more at large that nothing is impossible to fayth. It is certaine that it is an hyperbolicall kinde of speache when as

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he sayeth, that by faith trees and mountaines should be remoued. Yet the summe tendeth to this purpose, that God will neuer leaue vs, so that wee woulde open the doore to his grace. Neither is his meaning, that God will giue whatsoeuer commeth rashly in our minde or thought: nay, when as nothing is more contrary to faith, then the rash and vnaduised vowes of our flesh, it followeth that where faith reigneth, every thing is not confusedly desired, but that which the Lord alloweth. Therefore this sobrietie must bee holden, that wee desire not more then that which he hath promised vs, and that our prayers be restrained to that rule he set downe. If any man object that the disciples knewe not whether it pleased the Lord that the Lunaticke should bee healed, the answer is readie, that these things befell through their owne fault. For Christ now speaketh of a speciall faith, which had his secret forces as the present matter required. And this is that faith whereof Paul maketh mention in the 1. Cor 12. 9. Then how came it to passe that the disciples were spoiled of that power of the spirit, which they had before for the working of miracles, but that they had choaked it with their owne slouthfulnesse? But that which Christ spake of a particular faith according to the circumstance of the place, appertaineth to the common faith of the whole Church.

21. *This kind goeth not out,* In this saying Christ doth not reprove their sluggishnesse, that they might know that they had neede of no common faith: for otherwise they might haue excepted, & they were not altogether without sayth. Therefore the meaning is that every faith sufficeth not, when the battell is to be fought hotly with Sathan, but it requireth strong forces. And he prescribeth prayer as a remedie to the weakenesse of faith, whereunto he adioyneth fasting as a helpe. You, sayth he, tender exorcistes come forth as it were to fight with a shadow, or to battell in sport: but you haue to deale with a stout champion, who will not be overcome but with a great & sharpe fight. Therefore faith must be stirred vp with prayer: and because you are colde and slow to prayer, the helpe of fasting must also be added. Hereby it doth evidently appeare how ridiculous-ly the Papists doe of fasting make a medicine to driue away deuils, when as the Lord applyeth it to no other purpose, the to stirre vp a desire to prayer. When as he sayth that kinde of deuill can not be cast forth by any other meanes then by prayer and fasting, the meaning is, where as Sathan hath taken deepe rootes, & hath had a long possession, or where he walketh with an vnbrideled libertie, it will be hard and much a doe to get the victorie, and therefore wee must strue with all our forces.

Matthew 17.

22. And as they abode in Galilee, Iesus said vnto the some of man shall be deliuered into the hands of men,

23. And they shall kill him: but the 3. day shall he rise againe:

Marke 9

30. And they departed thence, & went through Galilee, and hee would not that any should haue knowne it.

31. For he taught his disciples, and said vnto them: the some of man shall be deliuered into the hands of men, & they

Luke 9

43. And whiles they all wondered at al thinges which Iesus did, hee sayde vnto his disciples:

44. Marke these wordes diligently: for it shall come to passe that the sonne of manne shall

again: and they were very sorry.

Matth. 18.

1. The same time the disciples came vnto Iesus, saying: Who is the greatest in the kingdome of heauen?

2. And Iesus called a little childe vnto him, and sette him in the midst of them:

3. And sayd, verily I say vnto you except ye be conuerued, & become as little children, yee shall not enter into the kingdome of heauen.

4. Who soeuer therefore shall humble himselfe as this little childe, the same is the greatest in the kingdome of heauen.

5. And who soeuer shall receiue such a little childe in my name, receiue me.

they shall kill him, but after that he is killed, hee shall rise againe the third day. 32. But they vnderstood not that saying, & were a fraid to aske him. 33. After he came to Capernaum, & when he was in the house, he asked them, what was it that ye disputed among you by the way.

34. And they held their peace: for by the way they reasoned among themselves, who should be the chiefe.

35. And he sate downe and called the twelue, & sayd to them: If any man desire to be first, the same shall be last of all, and seruauant vnto all.

36. And he tooke a little child, and set him in the middes of the, and tooke him in his armes, and said vnto them,

37. Who soeuer shall receiue one of such little children in my name, receiue me: and who soeuer receiue me: receiue me; but him that sent me.

shall bee deliuered into the hands of men.

45. But they vnderstood not that word: for it was hidde from them, so that they could not perceiue it: and they feared to aske him of that worde.

46. Then there arose a disputation among them, which of them should be the greatest.

47. When Iesus sawe the thoughtes of their heartes, hee tooke a little childe, and sette him by him,

48. And sayd vnto them: Who soeuer receiue a little childe in my name, receiue me: and who soeuer shall receiue mee, receiue him that sent mee: for hee that is least among you all, he shall be great.

32. As they abode in Galile. The nearer the time of his death approached, the oftner Christ warneth his disciples, least that feareful sight should weaken their faith. This speach was vsed a little after that the myracle was wrought. For Mark saith that he went from that place into Galile, that he might liue quietly ther in the meane time. for he had determined to come to Ierusalé at the solemne day of the sacrifice, because he was at the next passeouer to be offered vppe himselfe. And though they had bin often admonished of this matter before, yet they are no lesse troubled, then if they neuer had heard any thing of it before. The opinion which they had taken before, doeth so much preuaile, as that it darkeneth their minds in the most cleare light. The Apostles had imagined amongst themselves, that the kingdom of Christ should be quiet & pleasant. they thought that alioone as it should be shewed forth, it should bee receiued with the allowance of all men: there was nothing more incredible then that the priests and Scribes, & others the chiefe of the Church should be against it. Therefore they being in error do not admit any thing that is said on the contrary part: for Marke sayth they knew not what the Lord ment. But whereof commeth this ignorance, when as his woerde was so manifest and so plaine, but that that vaine illusion hadde couered their mindes as with a vaile, that they durst not aske any further: though it may bee partly attributed to a certaine reuerence,

yet I thinke not but that they held their peace as menne being oppressed with sorrowe, and stricken with that absurditie which they hadde imagined to themselves. Wherefore this shame is not altogether to bee praysed, which nourished a perplexed doubt and a corrupt sorrow. In the meane while a secret seede of godlinesse, rather then any manifest knowledge of the truth, tied them to Christ, that they should not depart from his schoole. There was some beginning or roote of fayth and of true vnderstanding planted in their hearts, so that the zeale of following Christ was far from that implicite faith of the Papists: but because they had not as yet proceeded so far in the knowledge of the nature of the kingdom of God, and of the promised renewing in Christ, I do say that the desire of godlynes did rather appeare in them then any certaine knowledge. Hereby we gather what was in them worthy either of prayse or of reprehension. But though their blockishnesse is not to bee excused: yet there is no cause why wee should maruell that to expresse and euident a declaration of the crosse and ignominie of the maister, was vnto them a riddle: not onely because it was contrary to the glory of the sonne of God to bee refused and to be condemned, but because there was nothing more vnlikely, then that the grace promised peculiarly to the Iewes, should be reiected of the gouernours of the same nation. And because the great horror of the crosse, wherewith they were suddenly taken, excluded them from the comfort of the hope of the resurrection which was added: let vs learne that so ofte as mention is made of the death of Christ, to comprehend the whole 3. dayes together, that the death and buryall may leade vs vnto the happy triumph and new life.

1. *The same time the disciples came.* It appeareth by the other two, that the disciples came not to Christe of their owne free will: but when as they had priuily reason'd the matter by the way, they were drawne out of their denne into the light. But there is no absurditie in it, that Matthew hasting to Christes answers, doeth not set downe the whole course of the history, but passing by the beginning, doeth summarily declare why Christ reproveth that foolish desire of soueraigntie amongst the disciples. But when Christ inquireth of the secret speach, and vrgeth the disciples to confesse, that which they desired to haue suppressed: wee are taught to beware of all emulation, bee it neuer so secret. Further, the circumstance of the time is to bee noted: the foretelling of death had made them sadde and doubtfull: yet as it they had heard of some fond fables, or had a poetickall cup ofaine & drinke begun to them, they doe presently sturue about the supremacie. How cometh it to passe that so great carefulnes should so speedily vanish away, but that the mindes of men are giuen so much to ambition, that they forgetting the present warfare, being deceived with a false imagination, doe straight steppe to the triumphs? If the remembrance of that so late y spoken, was so soone forgotten of the Apostles: what shall become of vs, if we bid the meditation of death farewell for a long time, and giue our senses to slouthfulnesse, to carelesnesse, or idle speculations. But it is demanded what occasion of trouble the disciples had? I answer, that flesh doth wilfully shake off all trouble, and letting passe all cause of heauines, doth take hold of that which was spoken of the resurrection whercof the contention arose amongst them being thus careless.

And

And because they doe eschew the former parte of the doctrine which is vnpleasant to the flesh, God suffereth them to erre in the resurrection, that they might dreame of that which should not come to passe, that Christ by preaching onely, should get himselfe a kingdome which should be earthly, that should presently grow to great wealth and prosperitie. But in this question there was a double faulte: for the Apostles dealt very preposterously, while they rejecting the care of warfare whereunto they were called, as souldiers that had well deserved, they desire rest, and seeke to haue rewardes giuen them with honor before the time. And secondly they dealt ill in this, that whereas they ought to haue bent themselves together with one consent, mutually to helpe one another, and to desire for the price, no lesse for their brethren then for themselves, through malicious ambition some of the induoured to preuent the rest. Wherefore, that our course may be allowed vnto the Lord, let vs learne patiently to beare the burden of the crosse that is laid vpon vs, vntill the full time come for vs to be crowned: further as Paul exhorteth, Rom 12. 10. In giuing honour, go one before another. The vaine curiositie of those men at this day is like to the former fault, which leauing the lawfull course of their calling, doe leape before their time about the heauens. The calling vs in the Gospell to his kingdome, sheweth the way that leadeth thither. But these winged men, not thinking of faith, of patience, of calling vpon God and other exercises, doe dispute what is done in heauen: but this is as much, as if any man about to take a journey diligently inquiring of the situation of his Inne or lodging, moueth not one foote forward: for when the Lord commandeth vs to walke vpon the earth, who so euer doth curiously dispute how the dead doe sit in heauen, doeth hinder himselfe from comming into heauen.

2. And Iesus called a little childe. The sum is, whosoever desire greatnes whereby they may be aboue their brethren, shalbe so far from obtaining the same, & they cannot sticke to the vtmost corner. And he reasoneth of the contrary, because that only humilitie doth extoll vs. And because that outward thinges set before our eyes do moue most, he setteth before them a figure of humility of a yong childe. For that he comandeth his to become like to a childe, is not stretched generally to al things. We know that in children many things are corrupt wherefore Paul would not haue vs to be children in vnderstanding, but in malice whom otherwise in vnderstanding, he comandeth to be of a ripe age. But because that infants do not yet know, what is to be preferred aboue others, that they should strue about superiority, by their example Christ would blor out of their minds, those things which prophane men & children of the world, do alwaies discourse of the pleasure of honours, least any ambition should stir them vp. If any man except that infants euen from the wombe haue pride grafted in them, so that they would haue themselves to be most accounted of, and most cared for: the answer is easie. Similitudes must not be too exactly nor narrowly sifted, to haue them agree in all pointes. But because there doeth yet raigne so great simplicitie in infantes, that they knowe not the degrees of honours nor the swellings of pride: therefore Christ doth fitly and aptly propose them for an example. And to this purpose appertaineth that conuersion whereof he maketh mention; namely, that the disciples had now framed themselves too much

to the common maners of men, and therefore that they might come to the right marke, their course must be turned backward. Euery man desireth the first or second place for himselfe: but Christ alloweth no man, no not in the lowest place, except that he forget superiority, and humble himselfe. And on the contrary he sayth that they shall be greatest which doe humble themselves, least that we should thinke that we loose any thing, when we doe willingly leaue all greatnes. And hereof may be gathered a short definition of humility namely that he is truly humble, who neither chalengeth any thing vnto himselfe before God, nor contemptuously disdaineth his brethren, nor desireth to be seen higher, but satisfieth himselfe to be accounted one of the members of Christ, desiring no other thing, then that the head may be onely exalted.

5. And who soeuer shall receiue, Christ now doth metaphorically call the children which laying aside all loftines, do frame themselves to modesty and subiection, and that is added in stead of a comfort, least submission should be hard & troublesome vnto vs, whereby Christ doth not only receiue vs into his own protection, but commendeth vs also to men, And by this means the faithful are taught how they should each esteeme of others, while euery man submitteth himselfe. For how is the mutual friendship commonly nourished amongst the children of the world, but while each doth beare with anothers couetousnes? Therefore the couetouser any man is of glory, the more boldly he taketh authoritie vnto himselfe, & he may be extolled, & that the lowly should be scorned & disdained. But Christ comandeth & the more any man doth humble himselfe, the more he should be honoured. And that is the meaning of that saying which is added in Luke. Neither yet doth he comand that they which are worthily despised, should be the more esteemed: but they which are void of all pride, & do make no account to be abased.

Math. 18.

Marke 9.

Luk 17

6. But who soeuer shall offend one of these little ones which beleue in mee, it were better for him that a milston were hanged about his necke, & he were drowned in the depth of the sea. 7. Wo be vnto the world because of offences: for it must needs be that offences shal come, but wo bee to that man, by whom the offence cometh. 8. Wherefore if thine hand or thy foote, cause thee to offend, cut them off, & cast them from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life halfe or maimed, then hauing two hands, or two feet to be cast into euerlasting fire. 9. And if thine eye cause thee to offend, plucke it out, and cast it from thee: it is better for thee to enter into life with one eye, then hauing two eyes, to be cast into hell fire.

19. See

42. And who soeuer shall offend one of these little ones that beleue in me, it were better for him rather, that a milstone were hanged about his necke, and that he were cast into the sea. 43. Wherefore if thine hand cause thee to offende, cut it off: it is better for thee to enter into life maimed, then hauing two hands, to goe into hell fire, that neuer shall be quenched. 44. Where their worme dieth not, and the fire neuer goeth out. 45. Likewise if thy foote cause thee to offend, cut it off: it is better for thee to goe halt into life, then hauing two feet to be cast into hell, into the fire that neuer shall be quenched. 46. Where their worme dieth not, and the fire neuer goeth out.

47. And if thine eye cause thee to offende, plucke it out: it is better for thee to goe into the kingdome of GOD with

1 Then said he to the disciples: It can not be avoided butt that offences wil come, but wo be to him by whom they come. 2. It were better for him that a great milstone were hanged about his necke, & that he were cast into the sea, then he should offend one of these little ones.

10. See that yee despise not one of these little ones: for I say vnto you, that in heauen their angelis walke beholde the face of my father in heauen with one eye, then hauing two eyes to bee cast into hell fire. 48. Where their worme dieth not, and the fire neuer goeth out.

6 But who soeuer shall offend. This seemeth to be added for the comfort of the godly, least their estate should seeme troublesome vnto them, if the world doth despise them: for this doth much hinder them from humbling theselues to this voluntary modesty: because they thinke that by this meanes they shall become contemptible, yet it is hard if we be not only loathed, but also trode vnder foete of proud men. Therefore christ encourageth his disciples with this comfort, that if the world despise their basenes, yet God doth not neglect the. Yet it also seemeth to tend to an other end: for the strife began of their superiority in honour. Whereof it might easily be gathered, that the apostles were infected with a wicked desire to be aloft. Also it canot be, but that he shuld be reprochful to his brethre, whosoever pleaseth himselfe too much, or desireth to be preferred before all me. To heale this disease, christ denoteth a horrible punishment, if any man in his pride shal cast down poore me, already humbled of their own accord. But he comprehendeth more vnder this word *Offence*, then if he had forbidde the contempt of the, though it canot otherwise be, that any man shuld carelesly offend the weak: but because he yeldeth not that regard & honor vnto the that he shuld. Now when there are sundry kinds of offences, yet what kind of thing an offence is, is briefly to be considered. If through our default any man either stumblith, or is brought out of a right course, or is hindred, him we are said to offend. Therefore whosoever desireth to escape this punishment which Christ denounceth so seuerely, let him reach his hand vnto those little ones which are holden as abjects before the world, & helpe the to run their course wel. For christ commendeth the vnto vs, that they might be to vs an exaple of willing humility: euen as Paul gueth this rule to the childre of god, Ro. 12. 16. that they shuld make theselues equal to the of the lower sort. Also in the 15. 1. that no man should please himselfe. And because christ set down that kind of punishment, which was the most fearful & wherewith most heinous offences were punished, we do thereby gather how deare & precious they are to god, which are vile & despised before the world. 7 *We be to the world because of offences.* This place may be expounded 2. wayes of the doct, as if christ should curse the authors of the offences, & so vnder the name of the world shuld all vnbeleueers be comprehended: or the sufferer, as if Christ shuld bewaile the euils which he saw to be at hand to light vpon the world for offences: as if he shuld haue said, no pestilence shal be more dangerous, nor shal bring mo miseries, the that it shal come to pas that many shal be troubled or fall away through offences. And this sence doth better agree with the place: for I doubt not but if the Lord had spokē of offences in the other sence, he would haue spokē more at large: that he might make his more diligent & careful to beware. Therefore least Satan shuld take vs or we be aware, the Lord crieth out that nothing is more to be feared of vs, then offences: for as Satan hath many at hand, so he ceaseth not to throw new before vs almost at euery step, & wee as creatures too weak or sluggish, do easily fall at the. So it cometh to passe that there are but few that doe make any meane proceedings in the faith of Christ. And of those few which do enter into the course of saluation, scarce euery 10. doe come to the goale without fainting.

Now, when as by this counsell Christ hath set his terror vpon offences, that he might make his more vigilant, woe bee to our carelesnes, if euery of vs prepare not himselfe valiantly to ouercome them. *For it is necessary.* That the Lord might the more thanpen the care and diligence of his, hee forewarneth that it cannot otherwise be, but that they must goe through diuers offences: as if hee should haue sayd, it is an euill that cannot be auoyded. So it is a confirmation of the former sentence, for that Christ doth thereby teach how many euils doe follow vpon offences, when as the Church neuer shall bee, nor can bee free from this euill. But he sheweth not the cause of the necessitie: as Paule 1. Cor. 11. 19. speaking of heresies, saith, that they must therefore arise, that they which are approued, might be knowne. But this is to be holden, that God would haue men in danger of offences, that hee might thereby exercise the faith of his children, and that he might thereby shake off the hypocrites, as weedes & chaffe from the pure & cleane wheate. And if any man shall murmur and cōplaine, that it is absurd for the Lorde to giue Sathan liberty to worke the destruction of wretched men: it is our part to think reuerently of the secret counsels of god: of which this is one, that it is necessary for the world to be troubled with offences.

But woe be to that man by whome offences doe come. After that hee exhorted his to beware of offences, he inuicigheth againe against the authors of them: and that his threatning may bee the more forcible, hee addeth that neither the right eye, nor the right hand are to be spared, if they giue vs occasion of offence. For I doe take it that this was added to amplify the matter, as if he should haue said, offences are to be resisted so diligently and constantly, as that it is rather meete to pull out the eyes, and to cut off the handes, then that you should nourish the offences. For, if any man shall doubt to lose any of his members, with this fauouring or sparing, hee casteth himselfe into destruction. Therefore howe horrible vengeance remaineth for them, which destroy their brethren with offences. But, because these two verses were expounded before in the fift Chap. it was sufficient now to touch the purpose, why Christ chearseth the same sentence in this place.

10. See that ye despise not one of these little ones. Because that pride is the mother of reproach, and contempte bringeth forth boldnes to offend, Christ vpon vrgent cause, that he might giue a remedy in time conuenient for the healing of this disease, forbiddeth the despising of little ones. And certainly as we touched euen now, whosoever shall haue a right regarde of the brethren, will neuer easily bee brought to giue offences. To the same purpose also tendeth this clause of Christes speech when to hee applied the beginning: namely, that wee must striue in submission and humblenesse amongst our selues: because that God embraceth the little ones with a singular loue. But it were too absurde for them to be despised or not to be regarded of any mortall man, whom God hath in so great estimation. Further, he proueth his loue by this, that the Angelles which are the ministers of their saluation, doe familiarly enioy the countenance, and beho'd the face of God. Though in my iudgement, he woulde not simply teach how honourably God doeth deale with them in appointing Angelles to bee their keepers, but also threatneth them that contemne them: as if he should haue sayde, their contemners

shall not goe free, whose Angels are neare at hand to seeke reuenge. Therefore let vs beware how their saluation be vile in our sight, for the procuringe where of the Angels haue their charge. That some do take this place, as if God should assigne proper Angels to euery of the faithfull ones is of no force: for the words of Christ doe not signifie any such thing, that one Angell should be alwayes appoynted to this or to that man: and it disagreeeth from the whole doctrine of the Scripture, which declareth that the Angels do pitch their tents about the goodly, and that the charge is not giuen to one Angell alone, but to many, that they should defend euery of the faithfull, Psal. 34. 8. Therefore let that fancy goe of the good Angell and the bad, and let it suffice vs to know, that the charge of the whole Church is committed to the Angels, that they may helpe all the seuerall members of the same, as necessitie and vse shall require. If any man demaunde whether the Angels, though by nature they are aboue vs, are yet in degree inferior to vs, because they are appoynted to be ministers to vs: I answer, there is no cause of let why they should not yeelde the obedience to God, in that free grace of his, which he bestoweth vpon vs, though so it cometh to passe, that they are called ours, because they apply themselves to helpe vs.

Matth. 18.

Marke.

Luke. 15.

11. For the sonne of man is come to saue that which was lost.

12. How thinke yee? If a manne haue an hundred sheepe, and one of them be gone astray, dooth he not leaue ninty and nine, and goe into the mountaynes, and seeke that which is gone astray?

13. And if so be that he finde it, verily I say vnto you, hereioyeth more of that sheepe, then of the nintie nine, which went not astray.

14. So it is not the wil of your father, which is in beauen, that one of these litle ones should perishe.

1. Then resorted to him all the Publicans and sinners to heare him.

2. Therefore the pharisees & Scribes murmured saying, he receiueth sinners, & eateth with them.

3. Then spake hee this parable to them, saying,

4. What manne of you hauing an hundred of sheepe, if hee lose one of them, dooth not leaue ninty and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, vntill he finde it?

5. And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders with ioy.

6. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends & neighbours, saying vnto them, reioyce with me: for I haue found my sheepe, which was lost.

7. I say vnto you that likewise ioy shall bee in beauen for one sinner that conuertheth, more then for ninty and nine iust men, which neede none amendment of life.

8. Either what woman hauing ten peeces of siluer, if she lose one peece, doth not light a candle and sweepe the house, and seeke diligently till she finde it?

9. And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends & neighbors, saying, reioyce with me: for I haue found the peece, which I had lost.

10. Likewise I say vnto you, there is ioy in the presence of the Angels of God for one sinner that conuerteth.

H h

11. Far

11. *For the sonne of man.* Now Christ also by his owne example exhorteith to giue honour euen to the weak and abieſt bre:hren. For he came not from heauen as a redeemer to ſaue onely them, but alſo for the dead, which had bene loſt. But it is two vile a thing for vs to loath them, whom the ſonne of God hath ſet ſo much by. Neither if the weak ones haue faultes, which might bring them in to contempt, is our pride therefore to be excuſed: for they are not to bee eſteemed after the value of their owne vertues, but for Chriſtes ſake; after whoſe example whoſo will not frame himſelfe is too ſloward & proud.

12. *Howe thinke yee?* Luke maketh a further rehearſall of the occaſion of this parable: namely that the Scribes murmured againſt the Lord, whom they ſaw daily conuerſant with ſinners. Therefore Chriſtes will was to thew, that a good teacher muſt take no leſſe paines to recouer thoſe, which were loſt, then to preferue thoſe, which are vnder his hande. Though the ſimilitude proceedeth in Matthew: namely, that the diſciples of Chriſte ſhoulde not onely be friendly entertained: but their faultes are to bee borne with, ſo as wee may endeouour to bring them that wander into the way. For though it fall out that they doe ſometimes goe aſtray, yet becauſe they are ſheepe, ouer whom God hath ſet his owne Sonne to bee their ſhepherd, it behooueth vs to gather them from going aſtray, ſo farre muſt wee bee from putting them to flight with vnkindneſſe, or from taking liberty to driue them away. For to this purpoſe belongeth that ſaying, heede muſt bee taken that wee deſtroy not that, which God woulde ſhoulde bee ſaued. That which Luke reporteth tendeth ſomewhat to a diuerſe end: becauſe all mankind is Gods, they are to bee gathered which are ſtrangers, and as great ioy is to bee made, while they that were loſt returne to good, as if any man ſhould beyond all hope recouer that, which hee was ſory ſhould be loſt.

¶ **L V. 10.** *There is ioy in the preſence of the Angels.* If the angels do reioyce among thoſe ſelues in heauen, when they ſee reſtored into their company, that which was loſt: it becometh vs that are in the ſame and like eſtate with them, to bee pertakers of the ſame ioy. But how is it, that hee ſayeth, that the Angels doe reioyce more at the repentance of one wicked manne, then at the preferuance of many righteous, whome nothing more delighteth then a continuall and iuſt courſe of righteouſneſſe? I anſwere, though it ſhuld more agree with the deſires of the Angels, (as it is alſo more to be deſired) that men ſhould alwayes continue in pure integritie: yet becauſe the mercy of God doth more appeare in the deliuerance of a ſinner, who now had been giuen ouer to deſtruction, and had fallen off as a rotten member from the body, he attributeth to the Angels after the manner of men, the greater ioy for this good vnlooked for or vn hoped for. Further, he doth ſpecially reſtaine the worde *repentance* to the conuerſion of them, which were wholly ſalne from God, as that they now riſe from death to life. For otherwiſe there ought to be a continual meditation of repentance through the whole life: neyther is any man exempted from this neceſſitie, when as their ſeueral ſinnes doe ſturre all menne to a daily exerciſe of the ſame. But it is one thing amongſt offences, or fallies, or errours, to goe forwarde to the goale, when thou art entred into the courſe: and it is an other thing, to call a man home from errour: who was altogether out of the way, or to beginne a right courſe from the priſons

prisons. They neede not such repentance, who haue now begun to frame their life after the rule of Gods lawe, that they might begin to liue holyly and godly though it be necessary for them to sigh vnder the infirmities of their flesh & to labour to reforme and correct them

Math.

Marke,

Luke. 15.

11. Hee sayd moreover, A certaine man had two sonnes,
12. And the yonger of them sayde to his father, Father giue me the portion of the goodes that falleth to me, So hee deuided vnto them his substance.
13. So not long after, when the younger sonne had gathered all together, he tooke his iourney into a farre countrey, and there he wasted his goodes with riotous lining.
14. Now, whē he had spent all, there arose a great dearth throughout that land, & he began to be in necessity.
15. Thē he went and claue to a citizen of that countrey, and he sent him to his farme, to feede swine.
16. And hee would faine haue filled his belly with the huskes, that the swine eat, but no man gaue them him.
17. Thē he cāe to himself, & said, how many hired seruants of my fathers haue bread inough, & I dy for hunger
- 18 I will rise and goe to my father, and say vnto him, Father, I haue sinned against heauen, and before thee,
19. And am no more worthy to bee called thy sonne: make me as one of thy hyred seruants.
20. So he arose, and came to his father, & when he was yet a great way off, his father saw him, and had compassion, and ranne, and fell on his necke and kissed him.
21. And the sonne sayde vnto him, Father, I haue sinned against heauen, and before thee, and am no more worthy to bee called thy sonne.
22. Then the father sayd vnto his seruants, bring forth the best robe, & put it on him, and put a ring on his hand, and shooes on his feete,
23. And bring the fatte calfe, and kill him, and let vs eate and bee mery.
24. For this my son was dead, & is aliue againe: and he was lost, but he is found. And they began to be mery.

This parable is nothing else but a confirmation of the former doctrine. And in the former part of it there is shewed, how ready and willing God is to forgiue sins: and in the other, how maliciously and peruersly they doe, which do murmur at his mercy, which we will handle after in that place. And vnder the person of a prodigal yong man, who through lust & riotous expēses being brought to extreame pouertie, returned in all humility vnto his father, against whom he had bin iniurious and disobedient, Christ describeth all sinners, who loathing their owne madnes, doe apply themselves vnto the grace of God.

And

And vnto a humane father, who not onely forgiveth the offences of his Son, but runneth willingly forth to meete him, he compareth God, who is not satisfied in pardoning them that aske forgiuenesse, except he doe also preuent them of his fatherly kindnesse. Now we will consider the particular poynts.

12. *The younger of them sayd.* Heere is first described a token of vngodly folly in a young man, in that he desiring to depart from his father, thought not himselfe well, except hee might haue free libertie to wantonnes, without checke or controulement of his father. Vnkindnesse is also added to the former, in that he forsaking the olde man, he doeth not only depriue him of thole duties which in right hee oweth him, but also spoyleth and diminisheth his goodes. Then followeth a riotous living in pleasure, and vnbrideled wickednesse wherein he wasteth all his goodes. By so manifolde sinnes he had deserued, that he should finde his father neuer to be appeased towards him. And it is not to be doubted but that the great goodnesse of God and his incomparable fauour is described vnto vs vnder this example, that no outrageousnesse of sinnes shoulde driue vs with feare from the hope of obtayning forgiuenesse. It is no sonde interpretation if any man shall say that they are like to this foolish and frowarde young man, who abounding with the Lord with great plentie of good things, yet being moued with a blinde and giddie couetousnesse, would part with him, that they might be free away from him: as if it were not more to be desired to liue vnder the fatherly care and gouernance of God, then to haue all the kingdoms of the earth. But because I feare least this allusion bee to subtle, I will be satisfied with the litterall sense: not that I finde fault with them, that vnder such a figure reprocue their madnesse, which thinke they shall liue happily to haue somewhat of their owne, that they might bee rich of themselves without the heavenly father: but because I doe nowe keepe my selfe within the boundes of an interpreter. But Christ heere declareth what vseth to befall to young men, when they follow their owne will: for they being voyd of counsell, and riotous in liuing, are vnmeete to rule themselves where feare & shame restraineth them not, it cannot be but that they should cast themselves headlong whether soeuer pleasure shall cary them, and being full of dishonestie, they make hast to vile pouertie. Afterward he describeth the punishment, which by the iust iudgment of God, remaineth for the most parte of such prodigall walters: namely, that their goodes being wickedly wasted, they shoulde bee thoroughly pinched with hunger, and because they knewe not how to vse thriftily, abundance of the best bread, they shall be driuen to feede vpon acornes and huskes. To be short, that they becomming swines fellowes, should thinke themselves unworthy of mans meate: for this is a hoggish deuouring, wastefully to spoyle that, which was giuen for the preservation and maintenance of life. That some doe subtilly expound this to be a iust plague of vngodly loathing, that they for hunger, should goe to the huskes, which refused the pleasant bread in the household of the heavenly father, doe speake very truely and profitably, neither doth any religion forbid the vse of this similitude: but in the meane season it must bee considered what allegories doe differ from the naturall sense.

16. *Hee would haue filled his belly.* It declareth that for hunger he no more thought vpon his former dainties. Neither when hee gaue this kinde of

of meate to the swine could he want. That saying of Cyrus is notable, who, when in his flight he had bene long fasting, being somewhat refreshed with meate and browne bread, sayd, that he neuer tasted so sauiory bread before: so necessitie compelled this young man, whereof mention is now made, to haue a stomacke to the huskes. The reason is added: because no manne gaue vnto him. For the copulation shuld in my iudgement be resolued into a word causall. Neither is this spoken of the huskes, which were by him: but I vnderstand it, that no man had compassion of his want. For no man thinketh himselfe bound to the prodigall, which wast their owne goods without regard: nay, because they were wont to spoyle all things, nothing is thought shoulde be giuen them.

17. *Then hee came to himselfe.* Here is a meanes described vnto vs, whereby God calleth menne to repentance. If they would willingly bee wise, and would yeeld themselves to be taught, hee would allure them more gently: but, because they frame not to obedience, except they bee tamed with corrections, he chastiseth them the sharplier. I therefore hunger was the best scholemistres for this young manne, whom plenty and fulnes made so outragious and disobedient. Being taught by this example, we must not thinke that God doth deale cruelly with vs, if at any time he lay greater troubles vpon vs: for by this meane he teacheth the freward and them that are drunken with pleasure, obedience. Further, what misery soeuer we suffer, is a profitable calling of vs to repentance. But as we are slow, so doe we scarce at any time come to a right minde, except we be driuen to it by extreame miseries. For vntill that troubles doe oppresse vs, and that desperation doth pricke vs, the flesh doeth alwayes list vppe it selfe in pride, or at the least resist good things. Whereby wee gather that it is no meruile, if that the Lord do deale oftentimes violently & doubleth his blowes vpon vs, to breake our stowardnesse, and as it is in the prouerbe, hee driueth hard wedges into hard knottes. It is also to bee noted that hope of a better estate, if he returned to his father, prouoked the yong man to repentance. For no greatnes of punishments shall ouerthrow our finnes, or make vs displeased with our finnes vntill some profit doe appeare. Therefore as the young manne by hope of his fathers kindness is moued to seeke for reconciliation: so the knowledge of the mercy of God must be the beginning of our repentance, which shall moue and stirre vs to hope well.

20. *When hee was yet a great way off.* This is the chiefe poynt of the parable, If men which by nature are desirous of reueng, and hold their owne right too fast, are yet moued with a fatherly loue, so as they do louingly forgie their sonnes, and of their owne free will seek out those lost wretches: God, whose great goodnes exceedeth all the loues of fathers, will bee nothing harder to vs. And certainly heere is nothing spoken of an earthly father, that God doeth not promise of himselfe. Before they cry, saith he, I wil heare. *Mat. 23.* That saying also of David is well knowne, *Psal. 23. 5.* I haue sayde I will confesse my vnrightheousnesse vnto the Lord against my selfe, and thoui forgauest the punishment of my sinne. Therefore as this father is not onely ease to be entreated at the prayers of his sonne: but goeth out to meete him comming, and before hee heareth any one worde, he embraceth him all torne and deformed as hee is: so God looketh not for longe entreatance: but as soone as the sinner determynerh

termineth to cōfesse his fault he doth willingly meete him. But it is a filthy quarrell of theirs, which do hercof gather, that the grace of god is not bestowed vpon sinners, before that they doe preuent the same with their repentance. Here say they is proposed to vs a father ready to forgiue, but it is after the sonne hath determined to returne to him: therefore God doeth not regard nor bestow his grace vpon any others then them, which begin to seeke the same. It is true, that it is required that the sinner should be grieued in conscience and displeased with himselfe, which should obtaine forgiveness: but they do very euil gather hereof, that repentance, which is the gift of God, doeth proceed from men of the proper motion of their own heart. And in this behalfe is a mortall man very fondly compared with God: for an earthly father cannot renew the peruerse heart of his sonne with the secret instinct of the spirit, as God doth of stony hearts make fleshy. To conclude, it is not handled in this place, whether man conuerted vnto God, returneth of himselfe: but onely vnder the figure of a man is commended the fatherly kindnes of God, and his readinesse to grant forgiveness.

21. *Father, I haue sinned against heauen* Here is an other part of repentance noted: namely, a feeling of sinne ioyned with sorrow & shame. For he that is not sory that he hath sinned, and hath not his offence before his eyes, will rather attempt any thing, then that he will thinke to returne to a good course: therefore it is necessary that a loathing of a former estate shoulde goe before repentance. But there is great weight in this speech, that it is sayd that the young man returned or came to himselfe. for who so followeth the wandring errors of his desires, is carryed into a forgetfulnes of himselfe. And certainly, the violent motions of the flesh are so wandring, that who soeuer giueth ouer himselfe vnto the, shall vanish a way as a man departed or gone out from himselfe. Therefore the transgressours are commaunded to returne to their heart, Isa. 46. 8. There followeth also a confession, not such as the Pope hath framed, but such as the son doth therewith reconcile vnto him his offended father: for this humility is very necessary for the redeeming of offences. This manner of speaking, I haue sinned against heauen and before thee, is as much as if it had bin sayde, that God was offended in the person of an earthly father. And certainly nature it selfe teacheth this, that who soeuer liueth vp himselfe against his father, doth also vngodly arise against God, who maketh children subiect to the parents.

22. *Bring forth the best robe.* Though (as it hath beene often sayd) it were a fond thing to search all small poyntes in parables, yet the letter shall not here be wrested, if we say that the heauenly father doth not onely so forgiue our sins, that he burieth the remembrance of them: but also restoreth those gifts whereof we were deprived: so as he spoyling vs of them againe, doth chastise our vnthankfulnesse, that with the reproach and dishonestie of the nakednes, he might drive vs to be a shamed.

Matth.

Mark.

Luke 15.

25. Now the elder brother was in the field, and when he came and drew neere to the house, he heard melody & dauncing.

26. And called one of his seruantes, and asked what

what those things meant. 27. And he said vnto him Thy brother is come, and thy father hath killed the fatted calfe : because he hath received him safe and sound. 28. Then he was angry, and would not go in: therefore came his father out and intreated him. 29. But hee answered and said to his father, Loe, these many yeares haue I done thee service, neyther brake I at any thy commandement, and yet thou neuer gauest me a kid, that I might make mery with my freindes. 30. But when this thy sonne was come, which hath deuoured thy goods with harlots, thou hast for his sake killed the fatted calfe. 31. And he sayde vnto him, sonne, thou art euer with mee, and all that I haue is thine. It was meete that wee should make mery, and be glad : for this thy brother was dead, & is aliue againe, & he was lost, but he is found

This last part of the parable accuseth them of vnkindnes, which maliciously would restrain the grace of God, as if they enuid that miserable sinners should attaine saluation. For we know that the pride of the Scribes is here restrained who doe not thinke that the reward due to their defects is not payed them, if that Christ shoulde admit the Publicans and the common sorte of people to the hope of eternall saluation. Therefore the summe is, if we desire to be accounted the sonnes of God, those faultes of our brethren, which hee fatherly remitteth, we must brotherly forgiue. They that thinke that the people of the Iewes are described vnder the figure of the elder son, though they do it not without some reason, yet they seeme to me not sufficiently to marke the whole course of the text for of the murmuring of the Scribes there arose a speech, as if they were troubled at the kindnes of Christ towards miserable men, which had beene loose liuors. Therefore he compareth the Scribes, which swelled with arrogancy to thurstie and modest men, who alwayes well regarded their household estate by lining honestly and sparingly: yea, hee compareth them to obedient sons, who all their life time doe patiently beare the authority of the father. And though they were altogether vnworthy of this prayse, yet Christe speaking after their sense, by concession imputeth vnto them this fained holines for a vertue. As if he should haue said, although I should grant vnto you that which you do falsly brag of, that you haue alwayes beene obedient sonnes vnto God, yet their brethren must not so proudly and cruelly bee cast off, when they repent from their wicked life.

28. Therefore came his father out. In these words he reproveth the intolerable pride of hypocrites, that they must be intreated of the father not to enuy at the mercy shewed vnto their brethren. Further, though God doth not entreate, yet by his example he exhorteth vs to beare with the faults of the brethren: And that he may cut off all excuse from their wicked rigor, hee doeth not onely bring in hypocrites speaking, whose false boasting might bee refuted: but also if any man shall wholly discharge all duties of godlines towards his father: yet he denieth him to haue any iust cause of complaint, for his brother is forgiuen.

It is certaine that the sincere worshippers of God are alwayes free and voided from this malicious affection: but the purpose of Christ is to shew, that hee is vnrighteous that enuieeth his brother receiued into fauour, although he would not giue place to the Angels in holines.

31. *Sonne, thou art euill with me.* There are two cheefe pointes in this answer the first is, that there is no cause why the Elder should bee angry, while he seeth that he is not indamaged by the receiuing of his brother into fauour: and the other that he hauing no regard of the saluation of his brother is grieved and sorry for the ioy conceived of his returne. All mine, sayth hee, are thine, that is, though thou hast yet taken away nothing from my house, thou hast lost nothing for all things remaine safe for thee. Further, what doth our ioy offend thee, whereof thou shouldest haue beene a companion? For it is meete to reioyce for that thy brother, who we thought had bin lost, is in safety, and returned home againe. Wee must note these two reasons: for neither doe we loose any thing, if God doe kindly receiue into fauour them, which by their sinnes had beene estranged from him, and it is a hardines without godlines not to be glad, when wee see our brethren restored from death to life.

Mathew. 18.

Marke

Luke 17.

15. Moreover, if thy brother trespass against thee, go, & tell him his fault betwene thee and him alone, if he heare thee, thou hast wonne thy brother.

16 But if hee heare thee not, take yet with thee one or two, that by the mouth of two or three witnesses euery word may be confirmed.

17. And if hee will not vouchsafe to heare them, tell it vnto the Church, and if he refuse to heare the Church also let him bee vnto thee as an heathen man and a Publicane.

18. Verily I say vnto you, whatsoeuer yee bind on earth, shall bee bound in heauen, and whatsoeuer yee loose on earth, shall be loosed in heauen.

19 Again, verily I say vnto you, that if two of you shall agree in earth vpon any thing, whatsoeuer they shall desire, it shall be giuen them of my father, which is in heauen.

20. For wheretwo or three are gathered together in my name, there am I in the midst of them.

3. Take heede to your selues, if thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him, and if he repent forgive him.

15. If thy brother trespass against thee. Because hee had spoken before of bearing with the infirmities of the brethren, now hee sheweth more plainly howe, and to what ende, and howe farre they are to bee borne with. For otherwise it had beene a ready obiection, that offences cannot otherwise bee auoyded, but that euery manne shoulde winke at the faultes of other menne, and so shoulde sinne be nourished by bearing with it. Therefore Christ

Christe prescribeth a meane betweene both, which neyther shall offende the weake too much, and yet shall be apte for the healing of their diseases. For seueritie compounded to the nature of a medicine is profitable and prayse worthy. In sum, Christ commandeth his disciples so to forgieue one another, that yet they endeavour to correct their faultes, which must be wisely obserued: because that nothing is more difficult then to spare and fauour men, and freely to reprehende their faultes. All men almost do leane to the oneside, so that either they do deceiue one another with deadly flatterings, or else they strike them to hardly, whom they should heale. But Christ commendeth to his disciples mutuall loue, which should be farre from flattery. Hee onely commandeth them to season their admonitions with moderation: least, if they be too austere and hard, they should ouerthrow the weake. And he expressly setteth downe three degrees of brotherly corection: the first is, that he which hath sinned, should be admonished priuately. And the second is, if he shew any token of stubbornesse, that he be againe admonished before witnesses. The third is, if he preuaile nothing this way, that hee be deliuered to the publike iudgement of the Church. And this is the purpose, which I speake of, least that charitie be broken vnder pretence of feruent zeale. Further, because ambition doth cary away the most part of men, so that they are too desirous to spread the offences of their brethren, Christ doth in time meete with this fault, commanding vs to couer the faultes of our brethren as much as we can. For who so are delighted with the shame and infamy of the brethren, it is certaine that they are caryed away with hatred and malice: for if there were any charity in them, they woulde haue regard of the shame of the brethren. It is yet demanded, whether this rule doeth generally extend to all sinners. For there are very many, which will allow no publike reproofes, vntill the offender be first priuately admonished. But there is a manifest restraint in Christes wordes: for he doth not simply and without exception commaund that whosoever sinneth, should be admonished or reproued priuately, and without any witness: but he would haue vs to trie this way, when wee are priuately offended: not because the matter is our owne, but because it is meete that we should be wounded with sorrow, as oft as God is offended. Neither yet doth Christ speake heere of suffering iniurie: but he doth generally teach vs, so to imbrace and vse louing kindnes amongst vs, least by handling the weake ones more sharply, wee should loose them which were to be kept. Therefore this clause *against thee*, doth not note an iniury done to some one man, but distinguisheth betweene secrete and manifest sinnes. For, if any man sinneth against the whole Church, Paul commaundeth that hee should bee publickly reproued, so that hee woulde not haue the very Elders spared. For of them by name doeth Paule giue Timothy charge, that by publicke reproouing them before all men, they might bee made a publicke example to others, 1. Tim. 5. 20. And certainly it were a ridiculous thing, that he which offended, so that his offence were openly knowne to the publike offence of the brethren, should bee admonished of euery one of them: for, so if a thousand knew it, he should be admonished a thousand times. Wherefore that distinction, which Christ expressly maketh, is to be kept, that no man by making secrete offences common, should rashly and without necessity defame his brother.

If hee shall heare thee, thou hast wonne. Christ confirmeth his doctrine by the profit and fruite that shall come thereof. For it is no small matter to get a soule to God, which was in bondage to Sathan. And wherof cometh it to passe, that they which are false, do seldome repent, but because that they being handled odiously, and as enemies, doe harden themselves in obstinacy? Therefore nothing is better then gentleness, which reconcileth to God them which hadde false from him. And he that doth intemperately runne into a fonde fauouring the offender, doth willingly loose the saluation of his brother, which he had in his hand. In Luke Christ commandeth vs expressly to bee satisfied with a private admonition, if our brother be thereby brought to repentance. Heereby is also gathered how necessary it is that there be amongst the faithfull a free and mutuall libertie of reproofing one another. For, when as euery one of vs doeth offend often euery day, it were extreame crueltie by our silence and dissimulation to betray the saluation of them, whom by a friendly reproofe we might deliuer from destruction. For though that successe doth not alwayes follow, yet doth there lie a great guiltinesse vpon him, who neglecteth the remedy prescribed by the Lord for the preservation of the saluation of the brethren. It is also to be noted, that the diligenter we are to performe this duty, the more the Lord doth yeelde ouer his owne honour to vs. For one man cannot conuert another, it onely belongeth vnto him: yet doth he adorne vs with this vnderfused title that wee doe gaine or winne a lost brother.

16. *If he heare thee not, take yet with thee.* The second degree is, that hee which behaued himselfe stubbornly towards one man, or would not abide to be taught, should bee admonished before witnesses. Some doe here object that it is in vaine to call witnesses, if wee haue to deale with a man that is disobedient and rebellious, for hee will bee so farre from being bent to acknowledge his fault in their presence, that he will more wickedly deny the same. But this knotte shall bee easily loosed, if thou wilt distinguish betweene a kinde or manner of denying, and of slypping backe. Hee that precisely denyeth the deede, and sayeth, that hee is falsely and slanderously charged, is to bee let alone: for it shall bee in vaine to vrge him by calling him before witnesses. But, because the molte parte of men doe eyther frowardly scorne, or impudently excuse that which they had done wickedly and vngodly, vntill they bee brought before greater authority, it shall bee profitable to obserue this course towards them. Also the saying of our Sauour must so be vnderstoode, as it appeareth by the word he vseth, which signifieth *to reprove*. To reprove, is to conuince by euident demonstration. And how should I reprove him, that stoutly denyeth the whole matter. For hee that hath so hard a browe, as to denie the offence committed, shutteth vp the way against the second admonition.

Nowe wee vnderstand against whom Christ would haue vs to vse witnesses, that the admonition may haue the more weight and the greater effect. But there is no absurditie in it, that he doth bend Moses wordes somewhat into another sense. Moses forbiddeth to giue iudgement of a matter vnknowne, and setteth downe this as a lawfull means of triall, that by the testimony of two or three, euery word may stand or be confirmed.

Christ

Christ alluding to that lawe, sayeth, that the cause is euident, where two or three witnessess doe arise to condemne the manne, especially that the iudgement of the Church may be the riper. Neither is there any cause why he should complaine of iniury, for being brought forth into the light, which refused to heare two or three.

17. *Tell it vnto the Church.* It is demaunded what hee meaneth or vnderstandeth by the name of the Church. For Paule, 1. Corinthians, 5. 5. commaundeth the incestuous Corinthie to bee excommunicate, not of any chosen number, but of the whole company of the godly, and therefore it may seeme probable that the iudgement was heere referred to all the people. But because that then ther was as yet no Church, which hadde giuen their name to Christe, nor any such order appoynted, and the Lorde himselte speaketh as of a manner vsed and receiued: it is not to bee doubted, but that hee alludeth to the order of the olde Church, as also in other places he applyeth his speech, according to the manner knowne amongst them. When he commaundeth, Matthew 5. 23. that the gift, which wee woulde offer bee leste at the Altar, vntill wee may bee reconcyled to the offended brother, it is not to bee doubted, but that hee woulde by the present forme and manner of worshipping of GOD vnder the lawe, teach vs, that wee cannot pray rightly, nor offer any thing to God, so long as wee are at discorde with the brethren. So therefore nowe dooth hee looke into the forme of disciplyne receiued amongst the Iewes: for it were absurde for him to appoint the iudgement of the Church, when as yet there was none.

Also when as the authoritie of excommunication amongst the Iewes was in the hands of the Elders, who represented the person or state of the whole Church, Christe dooth then very aply appoynt, that they which haue sinned, should at length be openly brought before the Church, if they do either proudly despise, or scoffingly scorne at private admonitions. Wee knowe that after the Iewes returned from the captiuitie of Babylon, they hadde a chosen counsell, which they called *Synhedrim*, in Greeke *Synedrion*, whereunto the censure of manners and doctrine was committed. This government and this brydle to keepe froward and yntactable men in order was lawfull and approued of God

If any manne except that all thinges were corrupt and out of order, at the comminge of Christe, so that that tyranny shoulde bee accounted nothinge lesse then the iudgement of the Church: The answer is easie: though the manner of their dealing was defiled and corrupted, yet was the order worthily prayled of Christe, as it hadde beene in tymes past deliuered by the Fathers. And when as shortly after hee erected a Church, the corruption being taken away, hee restored the pure vse of excommunicating. Yet it is not to be doubted, but that the order of disciplyne, which flourished vnder the kingdom of Christ succeeded in place of that Elder. And certainly, when as the prophane nations hadde a shadowe of this rite of excommunicating, it appeareth that God had put this into the minds of men fro the beginning, that if

any were vncleane and defiled, they shoulde bee driuen from the holy exercises.

Therefore it was a vile and shamefull thing for the people of God to bee altogether without that discipline, wherof there was remaining some shew amongst the Gentiles. And that which was obserued in the lawe did Christ translate to vs: because that wee and the auncient fathers haue one and the same cause. But it was not the purpose of Christ to send his disciples to the Synagogue, which when it willingly nourished filthy corruptions in her boosome, it excommunicated the true and sincere worshippers of God. But hee declareth that that order shoulde bee holden in his Church, which hadde bene holily appoynted vnder the law. That which is presently added of the Heathens and Publicans confirmeth the interpretation that I brought. For because the Heathens and the Publicans were then much hated and abhorred amongst the Iewes, vnto them hee compareth menne that are vncleane and incurable, which will obey or yeeld to no admonitions. It is certaine that he would not haue giuen this precept to the Heathens, of whome the Church should be gathered, that they shoulde flie from themselves: Neither is there any cause at this day why the faithfull should abhorre the Publicans. But Christ, that he might the better be vnderstood, borrowed that manner of speech, which was presently vsed in his owne country. But the meaning is, that wee shoulde haue nothing to doe with the contemners of the Church, vntill they repent.

18 *What soeuer yee shall binde.* Hee rehearseth the same woordes nowe, which hee vsed before in the sixteene Chapter: but in a diuerse sence. For there his purpose was to confirme the authority of doctrine, and heere he appointeth discipline, which is adioyned to doctrine. There Christe sayd that the preaching of the Gospell shoulde not be in vaine, but that it shoulde bee a fauour either to life or to death: here hee sayeth, though the wicked do scorne the iudgement of the Church, yet it shall not bee in vaine. This distinction must bee holden, that hee speaketh there of the woorde preached, and heere of publike censures and discipline. But let the readers seeke for the reason of binding and losing from thence. This is the summe, who soeuer hauing committed a sinne, doeth humbly acknowledge his faulte, and entreateth, so that hee obtaineth forgiveness of the Church, he is not absolved only of men, but also of God. Againe, who soeuer scorneth the reproofes and threatnings of the Church, if he be condemned of the same, that iudgement shall be confirmed in heauen, which was giuen by men.

If any man object that God by this meanes should be as an vnder iudge, without a voyce of his owne, but must subscribe to the iudgement of mortall menne: there is an answer ready. For Christ doth not so defend the right of his Church, as that he would thereby diminish his owne right and his fathers: but that hee would thereby rather sanctifie the maiesty of his word. For as in the sixteene Chapter his will was not to establish generally euery doctrine, but that which came out of his mouth: so neither in this place doth he say that euery iudgement shall be established and ratified, but that, wherein he himselfe is president and chiefe: and that not only by his spirit, but also by his word.

Whereof it followeth, that menne doe God no preiudice, while they pro-

pronounced nothing but from his mouth, and doe faithfully endeavour themselves onely to execute that, which he had commanded. For though Christ is the onely Iudge of the world, yet he would in the meane season haue the ministers of his word to denounce and proclaime the same. Further, he would haue the Church to deliuer his iudgement: So he derogateth nothing frō himselfe by vsing the ministry of men, but he alone loofeth and bindeth. Yet hereof ariseth a question, when the church tollerateth many hypocrites, & also absolue many, which pretende a fayned repentaunce, whether it bee appraunt that such bee absolved in heauen. I aunswere, that the speech is directed to none other, then to such as doe rightly and sincerely reconcile themselves, to the church. For he that would giue comfort, and take away teare from fearefull and trembling consciences, he sayth, that whosoever shall sinne, if they be receiued into fauour with the Church, are freed from guyltlesse beefore God. For hee appoynted this as a pledge of heauenly grace, which nothing pertaineth to hypocrites, which do peruert the right vse of reconciliation.

And there ariseth hence no small hope vnto the godlye, when as they heare that their sinnes are blotted out before God and angels, as loone as they obtain forgiveness of the Church. In the other parte there is no ambyguite of the meaning of Christ. For, when as stubborn & proud men are ready vnder this pretence to despyse the iudgement of the church, as vngodly knaues, they doe often very boldly appeale to the tribunall seate in heauen. Christ, that he may with terrour breake their pryde, saith, that their condēnation is ratified in heauen. In the mean while he encourageth his to a iust and righteous seueritie, least they should giue place to the wicked frowardnes of them which refuse or shake off all discipline. Heere is also to bee seene how ignorantly the Papistes, doe wrest this place, to colour all kind of tyranny. It is certaine that the right and authoritie of excommunicating is given vnto the church, and all men of a right minde doe confesse the same: but whether that euery man, or that one that is not called by the Church, but created by the horned and disguised beaste, may according to his pleasure send forth their vain and empty crackes of excommunications, according to their pleasure? But it is manifest that the lawfull gouernment of the Church was committed to the Elders, not onely to the ministers of the word, but to them also, which of the people were ioyned to them to be censors of the word. Yet they not contented with their former impudency, indououred to prone out of this place, whatsoeuer burdens they layd vpon the people to be borne. I speake not of that, that the moste wicked enemies of the Church doe vnworthily vsurpe, and by violence take vnto themselves, the authority which was granted vnto the Church: I onely say, when Christe spake not, but onely of correcting of sinnes, they which by their lawes in snare soules doe no lesse foolishly then wickedly abuse his testimony.

It is of the same sorte of branne, that vnder this pretence they defende their auricular confession. For though Christe appoynted that they shoulde be reconciled to the Church, which by their faulte were brought to the publike iudgemente: yet was it not his will to lay a lawe vpon all menne,

that they should vnburden them of their sinnes in the eare of a sacrificer . But their fancies are so friuolous, that it is not necessary to stand any longer to confute them.

19. *Againe, I say vnto you.* He confirmeth the former sentence: because God will not onely giue the spirite of counsell and wisdom to them that shall aske it: but he also will cause that whatsoeuer they shall doe out of his word, should want power and effect. But he ioyning consent to the prayer, declareth howe soberly and reuerently the faithfull shoulde behaue themselves in all their holy actions. The sinner must be admonished, and except hee giue place to that reproofe, he must be excommunicated. Here it behooueth not only to aske counsell of the holy mouth of God, that nothing be done but according to his word but also it is meete to begin with prayers. Whereby that which I taught before appeareth more evidently, that there is no licence giuen to men to doe what so euer they list, but God is placed as a reuenger of the gouernement of the church that he might defend and sanctifie the indgements, whereof he is the authour. In the meane season, while the faithfull doe meete, they are taught to ioyne their petitions and generally to pray together, not onely to refuse the vnicie of faith, but that God would heare the desire of them all. Therefore, as GOD doth often promise otherwhere that he will heare the pitiuate prayers of euery man: so here Christ adorneth publike prayers, with a singular promise, that he might thereby stirre vs vp the more earnestly to exercise the same.

20. *Where two or three are gathered in my name.* This promise stretcheth further then the former. For the Lord declareth that hee will bee present as oft as two or three shall bee gathered in his name, that hee may direct them with his counsell, and bring to prosperous successe whatsoeuer they shall take in hande. There is no cause therefore why they should doubt, which deliuer ouer themselves to be ruled by him, but that they shall feele by his presence that profite and fruite they shall desire. But sith it is an inestimable good thing, to haue Christ the cheife and presidence in all our affayres, as againe nothing is more miserable then to bee without his grace: this promise should bee no small spur to vs, that wee might godlyly and holyly ioyne together amongst our selues. For whosoever eyther neglecteth the holy assemblies, or negligently separateth himselfe from the brethren, or behaue himselfe carelessly in preserving vnicie, doth hereby declare that he maketh no account of the presence of Christ.

But first it must be provided, by they which desire to haue Christ present, should bee gathered in his name. But the definition of this clause must also bee noted, that the wicked do no lesse falsely and impudently then wickedly make his holy name as a cloake to their conspiracies. Therefore except we will cast Christ forth to their scornes, and together ouerthrow that which he here promised: first, it must be known what this saying meaneth: namely, that they which are gathered, all lettes, being cast away, which hinder vs from comming to Christ, shoulde come sincerely to Christe, and yeelde to obey his worde, and suffer themselves to bee gouerned by his spirite. Where this simplicitie taketh place, it is not to bee feared but that Christe by his blessings will openly declare, that

that the company is not gathered together in vaine. Wherein the grosse folly of the Papistes doth bewray it selfe. They cry that their counsels cannot erre, and therefore that all their decrees must bee holden: because that as oft as two or three are gathered together in the name of Christ, he is in the midst of them. But first it were to be demanded, whether they came together in the name of Christ or no, of whose faith, doctrine and affection it is to be doubted. While the Papistes doe omitte or hide this, who seeth not that the difference between the holy and prophane assembles, are subtilly confounded by them, that the power of doing any thing may bee transferred from the Church to the sworn enemies of Christ? Therefore let vs knowe, that none but the godly worshipers of God, which doe sincerely seeke Christ are comforted heere with hope, that they should not doubt of his presence. And the bastarde and vnfruitfull counsellers, which weaue webbes of their owne braynes, beeing lesse, Christe will alwayes remaine as chiefe with the doctrine of his Gospel amongst vs.

Matth. 18.

21. Then came Peter to him, and sayde, maister, how oft shal my brother sinne against me and I shall forgine him? vnto seuen times?
22. Iesus sayde vnto him, I say not to thee, vnto seuen times, but vnto seuentie times seuen times.
23. Therefore is the kingdome of heauen likened vnto a certaine king, which would take account of his seruants.
24. And when hee had begunne to reckon, one was brought vnto him, which ought him ten thousand talents.
25. And because hee had nothing to pay, his maister commaunded him to be sold, and his wife, and his children, and all that he had, and the debt to be payde.
26. The seruaunte therefore fell downe, and besought him, saying, maister, appease thine anger toward me, and I will pay thee all.
27. Then that seruants maister had compassion and losed him, and forgave him the debt.
28. But when the seruaunt was departed, he found one of his fellowes, which ought him an hundred pence, and he layd handes on him, and tooke him by the throat, saying, pay me that thou owest.
29. Then his fellow fell downe at his feete, and besought him, saying, appease thine anger towardes me and I will pay thee all.

Marke.

Luke 17.

4. And though hee sinne againste thee seuen times in a day, and seuen times in a day turne againe to thee, saying, it repēteth me, thou shalt forgine him.

30. Yet hee would not, but went and caste him into prison, till he should pay the debt.

31. And when his other fellowes saw what was done, they were very sory; and came and declared to their maister all that was done.

32. Then his maister called him, and sayd vnto him, O euill servant, I forgave thee all that debt, because thou prayedst me.

33. Oughtest not thou also to haue hadde pittie on thy fellow, euen as I had pittie on thee?

34. So his maister was wroth, and deliuered him to the iaylers, till hee should paye all that was due to him.

35. So likewise shall my heauenly father do vnto you, except yee forgieue from your hearts, ech one to his brother their trespasses.

21. *Maister, how oft.* Peter maketh this obiection according to the common sence and wisdom of the flesh. Naturally it is grafted in all men, that they would haue themselves pardoned, so that if any man do not presently obtaine forgiveness, he complaineth that hee is streightly and vnkindly dealt with: but it is much a dee to finde them that will shewe themselves easie to bee entreated of others, which desire to bee gently dealte with themselves. Therefore, when the Lord exhorteth his disciples to louing kindnes, this doubt came into Peters minde: what shall come of it, if we be so ready to forgieue, but that our gentlenesse shall be a baylight to prouoke them to sinne? Therefore hee demaundeth whether it bee conuenient to forgieue them that sinne often. For the number of *seuen*, signifieth as much as the aduerbe *seuen times*, & is taken for a great number. As if he should haue sayde, *Maister, how ofte* wouldst thou haue vs to receiue them that offend into fauour? For it is absurde and vnprofitable that they should finde vs so ready to be appeased. But Christ is so farre from being moued with this obiection, that he expressely sayeth, that there should be no end of forgiving. Neither yet would he appoynt any certaine number, but rather commaundeth that wee should neuer bee weary. Luke doeth somewhat differ from Matthew: for he simply reporteth the commaundement of Christe, that wee should be ready to forgieue *seuen times*. yet the sence and meaning agreeth, that wee should be ready and willing to forgieue not once, or twise, but as oft as the sinner repenteth. This is the onely difference, that according to Matthew the Lord reproouing Peeter, for that he was too straight in that behalfe, encreaseh the number hyperbolically, which of it selfe suffiseth to set forth the summe of the matter. Neither did Peter aske the question, whether he should forgieue *seuen times*, for that hee was content to goe so farre, but that by obiection or making a shew of great absurditie, he might draw Christe from his iudgement, as I touched euen now: for he that will be ready to forgieue *seuen times*, will also be appeased at the *seenty* offence.

But out of Lukes wordes there ariseh an other question: because Christ

Christ doeth not commaunde to forgieue, but when the sinner doeth turne to vs and shall testifie his repentance: for by this meanes hee seemeth to graunt his liberty to deny mercy and forgiuenesse to the wicked. I answer, offences are forgiuen two wayes. If any man doe me an iniury, and I laying aside the desire of reuenge, doe not cease to loue him, but in stead of iniury, I bestow a benefite vpon him: though I thinke hardly of him as hee deserueth, yet am I saide and accounted to forgieue him. For when God commandeth vs to do well to our enemies, he doth not therefore presently require, that wee should allow those things in them which hee condemneth: but hee woulde onely haue our mindes free from all hatred. In this kind of forgiuenes it is not to be looked for, that he which hath offended shoulde come of his owne accord to appease vs: so that it behoueth vs to loue them, which of set purpose exasperate vs, which refuse fauour, & heape old offences and new together. The second maner of forgiuing is, when we so receiue a brother into fauour, that we thinke wel of him, and are perswaded that the remembrance of his sinne is blotted out before God. And this is that I gaue warning of before, that Christ doth not here speake only of iniuries done to vs, but of all kinde of offences. For he woulde haue them that are fallen to be holpen by our compassion, which doctrine is therefore very necessary, for that by nature we are almost all froward beyond measure: and Satan vnder pretence of seueritie, driueth vs to extreame rigor, so that those miserable men that are not forgiuen are swallowed vp of sorrow and despaire. But it is here againe demanded whether a man is to be credited as soone as in worde he shall proffer repentance. For if this bee graunted, it shall of necessitie followe that wittingly and willingly they offend. And where were then discretion, if that without correction any manne might freely scorne at vs euen to the hundred offences? I answer first that he speaketh here of daily offences, for the which euen the best men hath neede of forgiuenes. Therefore, when as in so great infirmitie of the flesh, we haue so dangerous a way, so many sleights & assaults, what shoulde become of vs, if at the second and thurd offence all hope of forgiuenes were taken away? Secondly it is to be added, that Christ spoyleth not the faithfull of iudgement, that they should fondly be too credulous at one worde: but hee woulde onely haue them righteous and kinde, that they may reach their hande to the repentant: if it appeareth that from the heart they are displeased with themselves for their sinnes. For repentaunce is a holy thing, and hath need of diligent examination: but as oft as the sinner shall giue a signe of conuersion, Christe woulde that he should be admitted to reconciliation, least he being ouerthrowne with the repulse, should faint. Thirdly it is to be noted, when any manne hath giuen suspicion of himselfe, because of his lightnesse and inconstancie, we may so release him whin he asketh forgiuenes, that here after wee may marke his maners, least hee despise our patience and kindnesse which proceedeth from the spirit of Christe. For the counsell of the Lorde must be holden, that they that are fallen must bee holpen with our kindnesse, that they may bee rayfed vppe againe. And certainly wee must intreate the goodnesse of our heauenly father, who meeteth sinners a farre off, that hee may call them to repentaunce. Further, when as repentaunce is a meruellous worke of the spirit, and the creation of a newe manne, if we despise the same, we do in-

iury to God himselſe.

23. *The kingdome of heauen is likened vnto a certaine king.* Because it is harde to draw vs to mercy: and eſpecially when as many faultes of our brethren are to bee borne with, there doth preſently a loathſomneſſe creepe vpon vs, the Lord doeth confirme this doctrine, with a moſt apt and fit parable. The ſumme, wh. reoſ is this, they that will not be brought to forgiue the offences of the brethren, do very euill provide for themſelues, and they make too harde and too ſtraight a lawe for themſelues: for they ſhall finde God as ſtraight and as hard to bee entreated towardes them. For the ſimilitude conſiſteth eſpecially in 3. poyntes: for the maiſter is ſet againſt the ſeruaunt, a great ſumme againſt ſmall or meane thinges, ſingular clemency to extreme cruelty. For what are wee if we be compared with God? And now what ſumme is euery one of vs indebted towardes him? Laſtly, how light are the offences wherewith our brethren be endangered to vs, if our obligation to God be conſidered? Howe vnworthy therfore of the mercy of God is a miſerable wretch loaden with an intollerable burden, who is ſo hard to be entreated of his fellowes, that hee will not forgiue the leaſt offence? As concerning the wordes the ſpirituall eſtate of the Church, is here called the kingdom of heauen: as if Chriſt ſhould haue ſaid, the caſe betweene God and man in reſpect of the ſoule, and the eſtate of the ſpirituall life is at that poynt, as betweene a ciuill earthly maſter, and his ſeruants, in reſpect of money and the buſines of this preſent life.

25. *His maiſter commaunded him.* It were a friuolous thing ſubtilly to ſearch and ſift out euery perſicular poynt here: for God doth not alwayes ſhew his rigour vnto vs at the firſt, vntill we be driven to entreate and to ſue for forgiueſſe: nay he preuenteth vs with his free goodnes, but hee onely teacheth what ſhould become of vs, if God ſhoulde uſe vs, as in iuſtice he might. Alſo, if hee ſhoulde exacte of vs that which is due, how meete it were for vs to flee to prayers, for this is the onely remaining refuge for ſinners. The great difference betweene the ſummes is alſo to bee noted: for when as one talent is more then a hundred pence, what are a hundred pence to ten thouſand talents?

31. *When his fellow ſeruantes.* Though there is no myſterie to be ſought in theſe wordes, yet becauſe they containe nothing but that which nature teacheth, and wee doe daily learne by experience, it is to bee knowne that we ſhall haue ſo many aduerſaries and witneſſes againſt vs before God, as there are menne with whom wee liue: becauſe it cannot otherwiſe be but that ſuch cruelty ſhould be diſpleaſant and odious to them, eſpecially while euery manne is afraid of himſelte, leaſt that ſhoulde light vpon his owne head, which hee ſeeth befall vnto another. The queſtion that is demanded out of the ſentence following is but in vaine, how God will puniſh thoſe ſinnes which he hath forgiven: for this is the ſimple meaning: Though he offer mercy to all menne, yet they are vnworthy to enioy the ſame, which are ſuch cruell dealers, of whom no pardon may be obtained. But the Papiſtes are to bee ſcorned at, while they would draw their purgatory fire out of the aduerbe vntill: for it is euident that Chriſte here ſpeaketh of eternall death, and not of any temporall puniſhment, whereby he ſhoulde ſatiſſie the iudgement of God.

Mathew. 17.

Marke

Luke

24. And when they were come to Capernaum, they that received pole money, came to Peter, and sayd: Doth not your maister pay tribute.

25. He said, yes. And when he was come into the house, Iesus prevented him, saying: What thinkest thou Simon? Of whom doe kings of the earth take tribute or pole money? Of their children or of strangers?

26. Peter sayd vnto him of strangers. Then sayd Iesus vnto him: then are the children free.

27. Neuerthelesse, least, we should offend them, goe to the sea, and cast in an angle, and take the first fishe that commeth vp, and when thou hast opened his mouth, thou shalt finde a peece of 20. pence: that take, and giue it vnto them for thee and me.

24. And when they were come to Capernaum. The purpose of this hystory must especially be noted: for in that Christ willingly declared his subiection, euen as he had taken vpon him the shape of a seruant: yet withall hee sheweth both by words and by myracle, that he was not so debased either by law or by necessitie, but of his owne free and voluntary submission, that the worlde shoulde esteeme him, as some one of the common people. This was not custome which was wont to be gathered for passage, but a yearely tribute which was imposed vpon the Iewes for euery of their heads, that they shoulde pay that to tyrantes, which they were wont to pay to God alone. For we know that this tribute was set vpon them by the lawe, that by the yearely paiment of halfe a sicke, they should professe God of whō they were redeemed to be their chiefe king. When as the kings of Asia had translated it vnto themselves, it pleased the Romane s well to follow their example. So the Iewes being as it were estranged from the gouernement of God, paid to prophane tyrants the holy tribute commanded in the law. Yet it might seeme absurd, that Christ coming to redeeme the people, could not set himselfe free from tribute. That hee might take away this offence, he taught in words that he was bound thereto, but only of his own free will, and he proued the same by miracle: for hee coulde haue exempted himselfe from earthly Empire, that ruled the sea and fishes.

Your maister. Some thinke that the tolle gatherers vpbraided Christ, as if that he should withdraw himselfe from the common course. For as they were a scornewfull and a reprochewfull kinde of men, so I thinke that this was reprochewfully spoken. For whereas euery man was wont to be eased in his owne citie, we know that Christ had no quiet abiding in any one place. Therefore these men doe demand, whether he be free from lawes, because that as a wanderer, he goeth about hither and thither. And Peter in his answer made a modest excuse to appeale them: Yes sayeth hee, hee will pay. Whereby wee gather that Christ was wont to pay before, because Peter promised it as a thing not to bee doubted of. And that they call vpon him, rather then vpon the other, I thinke was for that Christ dwelt with him: for if they had all vsed one lodging, the exaction should haue beene common.

Therefore

Therefore the Papists are to be laughed at, which vnder so friuolous a pretence, do make Peter a companion with Christ in dignitie. He chose him a Vicar say they, and made him in honour like to himselfe, whom in paying of tribute he made equall to himselfe. But by this meanes they may make all swine-heards Christes vicars, for euen they payd as much. If that Peters supremacy appeared in paying of tribute, from whence is this immunitie which they challenge to themselves? But so it becometh them to be very foolishly fond, which doe so depraue the scripture after their owne pleasure.

What thinkest thou Simon? Christ heerein made a shewe of his diuinity, declaring that nothing is hidden from them. But whereto tendeth his speech? Is it to exempt him and his from subiection to the lawes? So some doe expound it that Christians are free by right: but that they doe freely submit themselves to the common order, because that otherwise humane societie could not be maintained. Yet I thinke this rather to be the meaning: Because it was dangerous, least the disciples should thinke that Christ came in vaine, for that by paying of tribute he might take away hope of deliuerance, he simply sayth that he doeth therefore pay tribute, because that he doth of his owne accorde abstaine from his owne right and power, whereof is to be gathered that nothing is diminished from his kingdome. But why doeth not hee challenge to himselfe that which was his owne? namely, because his maiestie was vnknowne to the tribute gatherers. For though his kingdome is spirituall, yet it must be so esteemed of, sith he was the onely sonne of God, that he was also heyre of the whole world, that all things ought to be subiect to him, and to bee brought into order before him. The meaning therefore is, that kings are not therefore appoynted of God to rule ouer mankind, neither hath he established common wealthes, that hee which is sonne, should without respect be brought into the same seruitude with other men: yet, vntill the glory of his kingdome be manifested, he doth willingly abase himselfe to be as a seruant together with others. The Pope doeth no lesse foolishly then happily abuse this, that he might free his cleargie from lawes: as though that a slaue crowne could make them the sonnes of GOD, which should be free from tributes and taxes. But Christ had no such purpose, as to challenge himselfe the honour of the kinges sonne, that hee might thereby at the least, obtaine to haue a house free by priuiledge from the common order. Wh. refore the Anabaptists doe very ignorantly wrest these wordes for the weakening of the pollicke estate: for there is nothing more certaine, then that Christ did not pleade for the common right of the faithfull: but tooke onely a similitude from kinges, which together with them of their housholdes are free.

27. *Cast in an angle.* Though I doe grant that Christes bagges were not alwayes full, yet I doe not thinke that he was enforced by want to giue this commandement to Peter: but that he might prooue by miracle, that his dominion reacheth further, then all the kinges of the earth, for he hath the fishes tributaries to him. And wee reade that he did this onely once: for one instruction in his whole life was sufficient. Further, a stater was so much in value as a siccle namely, foure drachmes, or two didrachmes.

Math. 19.

1. And it came to passe, that when Iesus had finished those sayings, he departed from Galile, and came into the coastes of Iudea beyond Iordan.
2. And great multitudes followed him, & he healed them there.

Marke. 9.

38. Then Iohn answered him, saying: Maister, wee saw one casting out devils by thy name, which followeth not vs, and we forbade him, because hee followed vs not.
39. But Iesus said: Forbid him not, for there is no manne that can do a myracle by my name, that can lightly speake euill of me.
40. For who soeuer is not against vs, is on our part.

Macke 10.

1. And he arose from thence, & went into the coastes of Iudea, by the far side of Iordan, and the people resorted vnto him againe, & as he was wont he taught them againe.

Luke. 9.

49. And Iohn answered & sayd: Maister, we saw one casting out devils in thy name, and we forbade him, because hee followed not thee with vs. 50. Then Iesus said vnto him: Forbid yee him not: for he that is not against vs, is with vs.
51. And it came to passe, when the dayes were accomplished, that he should be receiued vp: he settled himselfe fully to goe to Ierusalem.
52. And sent messengers before him: and they went & entered into the towne of the Samaritanes, to prepare him lodging.
53. But they would not receiue him, because his behauiour was, as though he would goe to Ierusalem.
54. And when his Disciples, James and Iohn sawe it, they sayd, Lord: wilt thou that wee commaund that fire come downe from heauen, and consume them as Elias did?

MAR. 38. Maister. Heereby it appeareth that the name of Christe was at then renowned, so that they vsed it, which were not acquainted with his disciples: or it may be that they abused the same, for I dare not affirme any certaintie of it. It may bee, that the party heere mentioned, embraced the doctrine of Christ, and gaue himselfe to worke myracles not of any euill minde. But because that Christe gaue this power but to certaine choyce preachers of his Gospell, I thinke that he tooke this vpon him vnadvisedly, or rather intruded himselfe into this office. But though he preposterously attempted this, in that he durst imitate the disciples without commaundement, yet his boldnesse was not without successe, for it pleased the Lord by this meanes also to make his name known: as hee woorketh sometime by them whose ministerie hee doeth not allow as lawfull. Furthermore, there is no cause to the contrary, but a man that hath a particular sayth, may followe a blinde zeale: and so cast himselfe headlong to woorking of myracles. Now I come to Iohn and to his companions. They say that they forbade a manne from woorking of myracles. Why did they not firste aske whether it was lawfull or no? For they being now vncertaine and in doubtr, do aske the maisters iudgement. Whereof it followeth, that they without consideration tooke vpon them authority of forbidding. Wherefore he is to be condemned of rashnesse, who soeuer shall attempt more then hee knoweth to bee allowed him by the woorde of God. Furthermore, Christes disciples are to bee suspected of ambition: for they doe this in defence of the priuiledge of their owne honour. For how commeth it to passe, that they should so dauidly

dainly reſtraine a man with whome they were not acquainted from working of myracles, but becauſe they alone would enioy this liberty? for they do alledge this caule, that he followed not Chriſt: as if they ſhould haue ſaide: Hee is no follower of thine as we are: therefore why ſhould he haue this honour?

39. *Forbid him not.* Chriſt would not haue him forbidden, not that he had ſet him a worke, or allowed his deede, or e'ſe would he haue it allowed by his diſciples: but becauſe that is to be borne with, and to be reſiſted at, where God is glorified by any occaſion. So Paul, Phil 1. 18. though he was diſpleaſed with the euill dealing or ambition of the wanderers, which boated themſelues with the name of the Goſpell, yet hereioyeth that the glory of Chriſt is ſet forth by this occaſion. And thereaſon is to bee noted, which followeth, that it cannot be, that he ſhould ſpeake euill of Chriſte, that wrought myracles in his name: & therefore that was to haue bene accounted as gaine. For thereof it followeth, that except the diſciples had bene more giuen to their owne glory, then ſtudious and deſirous to ſet forth the glory of the maſter, they would not haue taken the matter ſo grieuouſly, when as they ſaw the ſame ſette forth, and encreaſed otherwiſe. Neither yet, whereas Chriſt ſayeth that they are to bee accounted as friendes, which are not open enemies, doth he commaund to let the bridle ſlacke to all raſh menne to doe what they luſt, that wee ſhoulde hold our peace, while they according to their pleaſure ſhoulde ſturre hither and thither, and trouble the whole order of the Church (for ſuch licentiousneſſe muſt bee bridled ſo farre as our calling will ſuffer) hee onely denyeth that they doe well, which doe earneſtly withſtand and ſtoppe, leaſt the kingdome of God ſhoulde encreaſe by any meanes. Neither doth he ſo acknowledge them for his, as that he accounteth them of his flocke, which are indifferent betweene enemies and friendes: but the meaning was, that in as much as they hurt not, they doe profite and helpe. For it is a prouerbiall ſaying, whereby wee are warned not to moue warre, vntill we be prouoked to the ſame.

L V K E. 51. *When the dayes were accompliſhed.* Onely Luke reporteth this hiſtory, which yet is not a little profitable many wayes, for firſt the diuine fortitude and conſtancie of Chriſte in deſpiſing death is heere deſcribed. Then, what great hatred and enmities diſſentions in religion do breede: Thirdly, how the nature of menne is caried to impatience with a raſh zeale: Further, how ready and apt it is to followe the falles and faultes of the Saints: Laſtly, wee are taught meekeneſſe by the example of Chriſte. But the death of Chriſte is called a taking away, not onely becauſe hee was then taken from amongſt men, but becauſe that hee departing from the baſe priſon of the fleſh, aſcended vp on high.

He had ſettled himſelfe. Hereby Luke declareth, that when the death of Chriſte was before his eyes, the feare of it being caſt away, he went forwardes to meete the ſame. yet withal he declareth that he did ſtrive, that as a cōquerour of the terrour, he might boldly offer himſelfe to death. For if no feare had been throwne vpō him, if no difficulty, no ſtrife, no care, to what ſhuld he ſettle his countenāce? But becauſe he was neither blockiſh, nor yet caried away with a raſh & headie boldneſſe, it behooued him to be moued at that cruel and bitter death: Nay, at
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that fearefull and horrible torment, which hee knewe to bee neare ready to fall vpon him from the seuerer iudgement of God: and euen that is so far from darkening or diminishing of his glory, that it is a notable shew and declaration of his loue towards vs. For not regarding himselfe, that hee might apply himselfe to our saluation, through the midst of terrours he hastened vnto death, the day and time whereof, he knew to be neare.

52. *And sent messengers before him.* It is to be supposed, that he then had a great company of followers with him. The messengers are sent, neyther to prepare pleasant dainties, nor to chuse some beautifull palace, but onely to declare, that a great company of strangers were comming. But they being shutte out and repulsed, doe tarie waiting for their maister. Further, we doe heereby learne, that which I noted in the second place, when as men doe disagree betwene themselves in matters of doctrine of Religion, they do easily fall out into mutuall hatred. For it was a signe of most bitter hatred, to defraud the hunger of their meate, and to deny harbour to the weary. But the Iewish religion was so euill thought of, and esteemed amongst the Samaritanes, that they thought them not worthy of any kindnesse which followed it. It may bee, that the greife of the reproach vexed them, that they knewe that the Iewes accounted their temple as prophane, and detested it, and esteemed them as degenerate and corrupt worshippers of God. But when as superstition was once receyued, they frowardly sticked to the same, & with a wicked emulation they contended to defend the same.

At the length the contention grewe so hot, that in one fire it destroyed both their Countries: for Iosephus declareth that it was the firebrande of the warres of the Iewes. And though Christ could readily haue auoyded that enuie, yet he had rather himselfe to be a Iewe, then to get him lodging by an ouerthwart deniall of the same.

54. *And when his Disciples sawe it.* It may be, the region where they were, put them in minde that they should desire that lightning should fall downe vpon the wicked: for in times past Elias hadde in that place ouerthrowne with fire from heauen the kings souldiours, which were sent to take him, 2. Reg. 1. 10. Therefore it came into their minde, to thinke that the Samaritanes which so vnworthily reiected the sonne of God, were ordained to the like destruction. And heere wee doe see whether a foolish imitation of the holy fathers doth cary vs. James and Iohn doe pretend the example of Elias: but they consider not how much they differre frō Elias, they do not examine the extremitie of their zeale, they looke not to the calling of God. The Samaritanes had the like goodly pretence for their idolatric, as it is set downe in Iohn 4. 20. but they were both amisse, for that without any regard, they were rather Apes, then followers of the holy fathers. And though it is doubted, whether they thought the power to be in their owne handes, or that they desired Christ to giue it them: yet I doe thinke this the more probable, that they were lift vpp with a foolish hope, thinking themselves sufficiently armed to execute that reuenge, so that Christ would allow of it.

55. *Yee know not of what spirit yee are.* By this answer Christe not onely restrained the vnbrideled heate in the two disciples, but he also prescribeth a rule to vs all, that we nourish not any such heate in vs. For it behoueth him, who so euer he be that attempteth any thing, that he be well assured with himselfe, that he haue the spirit of God for his authour and his guide, and that hee be led with a right and a pure instinct of him. Feruencie of zeale doth cary many men-but if the wisdomedome of the spirit be wanting, they become as blubbers and frothe. Also it often falleth out, that the troublesome affections of the flesh are mixed with the zeale, and they which seeme to be most zealous of the glory of God, are blinded with a priuate affection of the flesh. Wherefore, except, the Spirit of God doe guide our zeale, it will not serue for an excuse, that wee attempted nothing but of a good zeale. But the Spirit it selfe shall gouerne vs by counsel & wisdomedome, that we doe nothing beside our duty, nor beyond our calling, also that we attempt not any thing but wisely and conueniently: Further, he will indue our mindes (euery dreg of the flesh being wiped away) with a right affection, that we desire not any thing but that which God commandeth. Christe also blameth his disciples, for that they were farre from the spirit of Elias, and that they doe wickedly in taking that to themselues which he did. For Elias executed the iudgement of God, which was comanded him by the spirit of God, but these men, not by the commandement of God, but by the prouocation of the flesh, are caried to seeke reuenge. Wherefore the examples of the Saints are no defence to vs, except the same spirit doe dwell in vs, which directed them.

Mathew 19.

Marke 10.

Luke.

3. Then came vnto him the Pharisees tempting him, and saying to him: Is it lawfull for a man to put away his wife for euery fault?

4. And hee answered, and sayde vnto them: Haue ye not read, that he which made them at the beginning, made them male and female:

5. And sayd: for this cause shall a man leaue father and mother, and cleaue vnto his wife, and they twaine shall be one flesh?

6. Wherefore they are no more twaine, but one fleshe. Let no man therefore put a sunder that which God hath coupled together.

7 They sayd vnto him: Why then did Moses commaund to giue a bill of diuorcement, and to put her away?

8 Hee sayde vnto them: Moses for
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2. Then the Pharisees came & asked him if it were lawfull for a man to put away his wife, and tempted him. 3. And hee answered, and said vnto them: What did Moses command you?

4. And they sayd: Moses suffred to write a bill of diuorcement, and to put her away.

5. Then Iesus answered and sayd vnto them: for the hardnesse of your heart, hee wrote this precept vnto you.

6. But at the beginning of the creation, God made them male & female:

7. For this cause shall a man leaue his father and his mother, & cleaue to his wife.

8. And they twaine shall bee
one

the hardnesse of your heart, suffered so put away your wines, but frō the beginning it was not so.

9. If say therefore vnto you, that who soeuer shall put away his wife, except it be for whoredome and marry another, committeth adulterie: and whoeuer marrieth her which is diuorced, doth commit adulterie.

one fleshe: so that they are no more twaine, but one flesh.

9. Therefore, what God hath coupled together, let no man separate.

10. And in the house his Disciples asked him againe of that matter

11. And he sayd vnto them: who soeuer shal put away his wife, & marrie another cōmitteth adultery agaisst her

12. And if a woman put away her husband, and be married to another, shee committeth adulterie.

Though the Pharisies doe lay snares for Christ, and do craftily set vpon him, that they might intrappe him, yet their malice wrought for our profite: as the Lord doeth wonderfully knowe howe to turne to the good of his, what soeuer things the wicked doe deuise for the subuersion of true doctrine. For by this occasion was the question answered, which the libertie of diuorcement did bring forth, and there was a certaine law deliuered, of the holy and inseparable knot of Matrimonie. But thereof is taken an occasion of quarrelling, because that the answer could not bee but odious on both sides in respecte of them. They demand whether it is lawfull for a mā to put away his wife for euery cause: If christ denie it, they will cry out that he doth wickedly abrogate the law. If he affirme it, they will bragge that he is rather a baud, then a Prophet of God, who will so fauour the lust of men. And this they had conceiued in their mindes: but the sonne of God, who knew how to take the wife in their owne subtilty, decieued them of their hope, and seuerely resisted their vnlawfull diuorcements: yet shewing withall, that hee bringeth forth nothing but that which was agreeable to the lawe. For he concludeth the matter in two pointes: he sayth that the order of creation should be as a law, that a man should keepe his marriage promise as a lawe all his whole life, and that diuorcements were permitted, not that they were lawfull: but because he had to doe with a people that was stubborne, and would not be taught.

4. *Haue yee not read.* Christ doeth not answere directly to that which is demanded, but hee doeth plainly satisfie the question proposed: as if any man now being demanded of the masse, should faithfully declare the mysterie of the holy supper, and should at the length inferre, that they are sacrilegious and falsifiers, that dare bee so bolde as to adde or to diminish any thing from the pure institution of the Lord, he should openly ouerthrowe the fained sacrifice of the masse. And Christe taketh this rule, God from the beginning ioyned manne and woman together, that they two might make one perfect man. Therefore hee that putteth away his wife, teareth away from himselfe as it were the one halfe of himselfe. But nature suffereth not, that any man should rend asunder his owne body. Hee addeth another argument drawne from the lesse to the greater, the bonde of matrimonie is holier and straiter, then that wherein the

children are bound to the parents. But godlinesse tieth the children to the parentes in a band that cannot bee loosed. Much lesse therefore may the husband, renounce his wife. Heereof it followeth that the bande made of God, is broken if a man be diuorced from his wife. And nowe this is the meaning of the wordes. That God the maker of mankinde, made man and woman, that euery man being contented with one onely wife, should not desire any others: for he resteth vpon the number of two, as also the Prophet Malachie, cha. 2. 10. when he inueighed against Polygamie, bringeth the same reason, that God in whom ther was aboundance of spirit, so that it was at his pleasure to create mo, yet made but one man: namely, such as is here described of Christ. Therefore the inseparable societie of one husband with one wife, is proued by the order of creation. If any man shall obiekt, that by this reason it shall not be lawfull, the firste wife being dead, to take an other: The answere is easie: the bande is not only broken by death, but the second wife is placed of God in the roomth of the former, as if shee were one and the same.

5. *For this cause shall a man leaue father.* It is doubted whether Moses bringeth in Adam, or God speaking in that place: but whether of the two thou takest, it maketh little to this present place: for it was sufficient to bring the Oracle of God, though it should be spoken by Adam. But hee doth not simply command him that marieth a wife, to leaue his father, for so God should be contrary to himselfe, if by Matrimonie he should abolish that honour which he commandeth children to vse towards their parents: but while comparison is made betwene those duties, the wife is preferred before father and mother. But if any man should send backe message to his father, & should shake off that yooke whereto he is bounde, no man would allow such a monster. Much lesse then shall there be libertie granted to dissolue Matrimonie.

They shall be two in one flesh. By this Polygamie is no lesse condemned, then that libertie of putting away wiues. For if the knitting together of two be sanctified of the Lorde, then the ioyning eyther with three or foure is adulterous. But Christ as I sayd a little before, doeth apply it otherwise to his purpose, euen thus, that who soeuer should put away his wife, should rend himselfe in peeces: for the power of holy Matrimonie is such, that the husbände and the wife become one fleshe. Neither was it the purpose of Christ to bring in the foule & filthy deuice of Plato, but hee speaketh reuerently of that order appoynted by God. Therefore let the husband & the wife so liue together, that the one may so nourish the other, euen as the one halfe part of himselfe: and let him so command, as the head of the wife, and not as a tyrant: in like maner let the woman modestly submit her selfe in obedience.

6. *That which God hath ioyned together.* Christe in this sentence brideleth the lust of men, that they should not by forsaking their wiues, breake the holy knot. And as he denieth it to be in the power of the man to break matrimony, so hee giueth alaw to all others, that they shoulde not confirme vnlawfull diuorces by their authority. For the Magistrate abuserh his authoritie, which sheweth fauour to a mā to put away his wife: yet christ properly bent himselfe to this purpose, & euery man should religiously maintaine the faith which he hath giuen for himselfe, and they which are prouoked by lust or wicked affection to diuorcement:

let them thus think with themselves: who art thou that wouldst take liberty to thy selfe to breake that which God hath ioyned. But this doctrine may also be applied further. The Papiists imagining vs a Church separated from Christ her head, they do leaue vs an vnperfect & a maimed body: in the holy supper where-as Christe ioyned bread and wine, they are so bolde as to deprive all the people of the vse of the cuppe. Against these deuilish corruptions we may oppose: that which God hath ioyned together, let no man put a sunder.

7. *Why then did Moses.* They hadde thought vpon this quarrell before, if Christe (which was most likely) shoulde require the lawfull vse of diuorcements. For what soeuer God permitteth in his lawe, seemeth to bee lawfull, whose onely will maketh the difference betweene good and euill. But Christe meeteth their false enuy with a fitt answer, that Moses graunted this for their frowardnesse, and not as that he should allow it as lawfull. And he confirmeth this saying with a notable reason: *Because it was not so from the beginning.* Hee taketh this as graunted, when God at the beginning instituted Matrimonic, he established a perpetuall law which should be in force euen to the end. If that the institution of Matrimony is to bee accounted as a lawe inuiolable, it followeth that what soeuer declineth from the same, proceedeth not from the pure nature of the same, but of the corruption of men. Yet it is demanded whether it was lawfull for Moses to permitte that, which of it selfe was euill and corrupt: I answer, that which he did not severely forbidde, is vnproperly sayde to bee permitted. For he gaue no lawe of diuorcementes, as that he woulde approue the same by his allowance: but when as the wickednesse of men coulde not otherwise bee restrained, hee gaue that remedy which was most trollerable, that the man shoulde at the least giue testimony of the chastity of his wife. For the law was not giuen but in fauour of the women, least that after they were vniustly reiecte, they shoulde incurre any slander. Whereby we gather that it was rather a punishment layd vpon the men, then a liberty or permission graunted for the prouocation of their lust. Note also that the spirituall gouernment, doth differ much from the politike and outward order. What is lawfull and meete to bee done, the Lorde comprehendeth in tenne wordes: nowe because it may bee that many things are not called before the iudgement seate of men, whereof euery mannes conscience reprocueth and conuinceth him, it is no meruaile if politike lawes doe agree vnto them. Let vs take a familiar example, we haue greater liberty to contende by lawes, then the rule of charitie will beare. Why is this so? because right cannot bee giuen to euery manne, except there bee a way opened to demande it: in the meane season the inwarde lawes of GOD sheweth, that that must be followed which charity commaundeth, yet there is heere no cause why Magistrates shoulde bee excused for their negligence, if they doe of their owne accorde cease from correctinge of sinnes, or shall omitte those things which the estate of their callinge doeth require. But lette priuate menne take heede, leaste by coueringe their offences, vnder pretence of lawes, they double their faulte. For the Lorde doeth here by the way blame the Iewes, as if it were not sufficiēt for the to haue their frowardnes born with, or passed by without punishment, except they shuld make God the author

of their sinne. If that rule of liuing godly and holily cannot alway nor euery where bee gathered out of the lawes politticke, much lesse of custome.

9. *If say vnto you.* Marke reporteth that this was spoken to the Disciples aparte, when they were come into the house: but Matthewe omitting this circumstance, setteth downe the speech: as the Euangelistes doe often leaue out some circumstance by the way. For they count it sufficient to gather the summs of things. So there is no difference but that the one setteth downe the matter more plainly then the other. And this is the summe: Though the lawe doth not punish diuorcements, which do differ from the first institution of God, yet hee is an adulterer which putteth away his wife, and taketh him another. For it is not in the will and pleasure of manne, to dissolue the faith of Matrimonie, which the Lorde would haue to remaine firme and sure, therefore she is a harlot that supplyeth the rounth of the lawfull wife. But hee putteth an exception, because that a woman by committing whoredome, cutting her selfe as a rotten member from her husband, setteth him at liberty. They which doe deuise other causes, are worthily reiected, because they will bee wiser then the heavenly maister.

They will haue the Leprosie to bee a lawfull cause of diuorcement, because the infection thereof doeth not onely infecte the husbände but also the children. But as I woulde counsell a young man that hee should not touch his wife that hath the Leprosie, so I do not allow him that liberty to put her away. If any man obiecte, that they which cannot liue alone, haue neede of remedy, least they shoulde burne: I say, that is no remedy, which is without the warrant of the word of God. I adde also, that they shall neuer want the gifte of continencie, if they would deliuer themselues to be gouerned of the Lord: because they follow, that which hee prescribeth. Some manne shall begin to loath his wife, so that he cannot abide to lie with her: shall this euill bee remitted by taking two wiues? An other mans wife shall fall into the pallsie, or Apoplexie, or shall bee diseased with some other incurable disease: shall her husband reiecte her vnder pretence of innocencie? But we know that they shall neuer want the helpe of the spirite, which do walke in his wayes. For the auoyding of fornication, sayth Paule, 1. Cor. 7. 2. Let euery man marry a wife. Hee that hath done this, though it fall not out according to his desire, hath done his part. Therefore, if any thing want, it shall be amended by the help of God. To go any further, it is nothing lesse then to tempt God. And whereas Paul noeth an other cause, 1. Cor. 7. 25. namely, whereas for hatred of godlines, the married persons are reiecte of the vnbeleeuers, that a godly brother or sister, is not then subiect to bondage, is not repugnant from the minde of Christ. For he doth not speake there of a lawfull cause of diuorcement, but onely whether a woman continueth bounde to the vnbeleeuing man, after that she is for hatred of God wickedly put away, and cannot otherwise be receiued into fauour, the if she deny God. Whercof it is no meruaile that Paule chuseth rather to bee separated from men, then to be alienated from God. Yet that exception which Christe putteth, seemeth to be in vaine. For if the adulteresse deserueth death, to what purpose shuld he speake of diuorcement?

But because it was the duty of the husband to follow the adultery with iudgements, that he might cleare his house of that offence, whatsoever the success be, Christ setteth the husband that conuinceth his wife of vnchastitie free from that bonde: and it may be that amongst a corrupt and wicked people this sinne might raigne with freedom from punishment. As the ouertwharte pittie of Magistrates at this day, driueth men of necessity to put away their defiled wiues because adulteries are not punished. And it is to bee noted, that this law is common and free to both partes, as the bonde of faith is mutual and like. For where as the husband is cheife in other thinges, in respect of the bed hee is equall to the wife, for hee is not maister of his owne body. Therefore, when as the adulterer shall fall away from the knot of matrimonie, the wife is set at libertie.

Hee that marieth her that is put away. This sentence hath bene most corruptly expounded by many interpreters: for they thought generally and confusedly, that it was commaunded to liue sole after diuorcement. So if the husbände should put away the adulteresse, of necessitie they both shoulde liue vnmarried. As if that this were the libertie of diuorcement, onely to lie away from the wife: as if also Christ did not evidently in this cause permit that to be done, which the Iewes were woont generally to vsurpe vnto themselves according to their owne pleasure. Therefore that errour was too grosse: for when Christe condemneth him for adulterie that marieth her that is put away, it is certaine that this is to be vnderstoode of vnlawfull and friuolous diuorcements.

Therefore Paule commaundeth them to remaine vnmarried, which are so put away, or to be reconciled to their husbandes: because that matrimonie is not ouerthrowne by brawlinges and dissentiones, as in the first Epistle to the Corinthians, the seuenth chapter, and the eleuenth verse, and that is gathered out of Marke, whereas the wife by name is spoken of, which should depart from her husbände: not that it was lawfull for the wiues so to giue a bill of diuorcement to the husbandes, but that the Iewes were fallen into strange corruptions: but Marke noted the corruption which the Lord reprobud, and then raigned euery where, that after voluntary diuorcements they both went forward to a newwe mariage. Therefore he maketh no mention of adulterie.

Matthew 19.

Marke

Luke

10. Then said his disciples to him: If the matter bee so betweene man and wife, it is not good to marrie.

11. But he sayd vnto them, all men cannot receiue this thing, saue they to whom it is giuen,

12. For there are some chaste, which were so borne of their mothers belly: and there bee some chaste, which be made chaste by menne: and there bee some chaste, which haue made themselves chaste for the kingdome of heauen.

He that is able to receiue this, let him receiue it.

As though the estate of husbands were very hard, that so long as they shall remaine chaste, they should be compelled rather to beare all other things then to depart from them: the Disciples moued with this answer of Christe doe except, that it is better to bee without wines, then to be caught in such a snare. But why doe they not againe consider howe straight the bondage of the wines is, but that the affections of the fleshe doeth tie them to themselves and their owne commodities, that despising all others, they onely desire to bee prouided for themselves. Yet heere doeth a vile vnthankfulnesse appeare, that they would refuse the singular gifte of GOD, eyther for feare or wearines of one discomfort. It were better according to their opinion, to auoyde marriage, then to tie himselfe in a bande of perpetuall fellowship. And if God hath instituted Matrimonie for the common good of mankinde, though it bringeth some things which are not very acceptable, it must not therefore be despised.

Therefore let vs learne if among the blessings of GOD, there bee any thing which pleaseth not vs, let vs not bee so daintie nor so frowarde, but let vs vse them with reuerence. Especially, wee must take heede of this wickednes in holy Matrimonie: for because it is inwrapped with many troubles, Satan indoeuoreth to vex it with hatred, and infamie, that he might withdraw men from it. And Hierome heerein shewed too euident a token of a malicious and peruerse witte, in that he doeth not onely quarrell at that holy and godly order of life: but whattauntes or reproches soeuer hee canne gather out of prophane writers, hee casteth vpon it, that hee might slander and deforme the beautie of the same. And let vs thinke that what soeuer troubles doe befall in Matrimonie, are accidentall, because they arise of the corruption of men.

Also let vs remember, that sith after our nature was corrupted, it became a medicine or salve, it is no maruaile if a sower taste bee mixed with the sweete. But it is to be seene how the Lord reproveth this foolishnesse. Hee denying all men to be receiuers of this saying, declareth that the choise is not in our hand, as if that wee had authoritie to consult of the matter. If any man thinke it profitable for him to bee without a wife, and so without tryall made, doeth lay a lawe of sinfull life vpon himselfe, is farre deceiued. For God, who sayde it is good that woman be a helpe to man, will punish the contempt of his order: for mortall menne doe arrogate too much vnto themselves, while they strue to exempt themselves from the heavenly calling. Further, that it is not free for all men to chuse which they lust, Christ proueth by this, because continencie is a speciall gifte. For when he sayth, all cannot receiue it, but they to whom it is giuen, he plainly declareth that it is not giuen to all men. Whereby their pride is conuincd, which doubt not to arrogate to themselves, that which Christ so plainly taketh from them.

12. *For there are some chaste.* Christe nameth three kindes of menne that are chaste. They which are chaste by nature, or whiche are made chaste by men, are driuen from Matrimonie by want: because they lacke those partes of a manne. Others hee sayeth are chaste, whiche haue made themselves chaste, that they might the better serue God. These hee setteth free

free from the necessitie of marriage. Whereof it followeth, that all other which doe abhorre Matrimonie, doe with a sacrilegious boldnesse after the manner of giants) fight with God. The Papistes vrging this worde, making chaste, as if men of their owne pleasure, could make lawes of continency, is too colde. For Christe first sheweth that God giueth this to whom he thinketh good. And a litle after hee doth againe affirme, that the sole life is rashly chosen, where any man is not indued with a speciall giste. Wherefore this making chaste, is not subiect to free will: but the plaine meaning is: when by nature some are apt to marriage, though they doe abstaine, yet they tempt not God, because God graunteth them liberty.

For the kingdome of heauen. Many doe foolishly expound it, for the deseruing of eternall life: as if that sole life contained in itselfe some meritorious worship, as the Papists doe faine it to bee an Angelicall estate. But Christ ment nothing els, but that the married ought to haue this ende set before them, that they being free from all cares, might the diligentlier apply themselves to the exercises of godlines. Therefore it is a foolish imagination, to account sole life for a vertue: for God is no more pleased by that, then hee is by fasting, neither doeth it deserve to be accounted amongst those duties which God requireth of vs, but he must looke to an other end: For Christ would expressly set downe, though any man be free from whoredome, yet his sole life is not approued of God, if he onely provide for his owne ease and delights: but hee is onely hereby excused, if he apply it to a free and quiet meditation of the heavenly life. In summe, Christ teacheth that it is not sufficient, if the vnmarried doe liue chastly, except they do purposely abstain fro it, that they might apply themselves to better exercises.

Hee that is able to receiue this let him receiue it. By this clause Christe warneth that the vse of Matrimonie must not bee despised, except that in a blinde rashnesse we would cast our selues headlong to destruction: for it behoued him to lay his hand vpon his disciples, whome hee saue runne headlong without iudgement. But this admonition is profitable for all menne: for few in choyce of that kinde of life that they will leade, doe consider what is given them of God: but they leape without choyce, whether soeuer their vnadvised heate doth cary them: and I would this had been better heard heretofore. But I know not with what enchauntments of Sathan their eares were stopt, that against nature, and as it were in despite of God, they would lay vpon themselves that snare of perpetuall single life, whom God hadde called to marriage: after, their miserable soules are so caught in the deadly snare of a vow, so that they would neuer out of that pit.

Matth. 19.

13. Then were brought to him little childre, that he should put his hands on them, and pray, & the disciples rebuked them.

14. But Iesus sayde: Suffer the little

Marke 10.

13. Then they brought little childre to him, that he should touch them: & his disciples rebuked those that brought them.

14. But when Iesus saw it he was

Luke 18.

15. They brought vnto him also babes, that hee should touch them, And when his disciples sawe it, they rebuked them. 16. But Iesus called

K k 4

little children, and forbid them not to come to me: for of such is the kingdom of heauen.

13. And when he had put his hands on them, he departed thence.

was displeased, and sayd vnto them: Suffer the little childre to come to me, ~~for~~ forbid them not, for of such is the kingdom of god.

15. Verily I say vnto you: who soeuer shall not receiue the kingdom of God as a little childe, shall not enter therein.

16. And hee tooke them vp in his armes, and put his handes vpon them, and blessed them.

led them vnto him and saide suffer the babes to come vnto me, and for bid the not: for of such is kingdoms of God.

17. Verily I say vnto you, who soeuer receiueth not the kingdom of God as a babe, he shall not enter therein.

This history is very profitable, because it teacheth that Christ doth not onely receiue them which do willingly come to him, by the motion of a holy desire & faith, but also them which by reason of their age, feele not how greatly they doe neede his grace. There is as yet no vnderstanding in these little children, that they should desire to be blessed: yet he receiueth them louingly and kindly, & with a solempne manner of blessing, he consecrateth them to his father.

Their purpose also, which brought the children to christ, should be obserued: for except they had a stedfast perswasion in their mindes, that hee had the power of the spirit in his hand, to poure out vpon the people of God, it had bin absurde to haue brought children to him. Wherefore it is not to bee doubted, but that they desired that his grace might be bestowed vpon them. Therefore for the amplifying of the matter, Luke addeth this word *Also*, as if he shoulde haue said, after they had tried how many wayes he holpe the that were growne in yeares, they hoped also that children should not go away from him altogether voyd of all the gifts of the spirit, if he shuld lay his hands vpon the. Also, the laying on of hands (as wee sayd other where) was an auncient & solempne manner of blessing amongst the Iewes: therefore it is no maruell, if they desire Christe to pray for their children by vsing that solempne ceremonie. Yet by the way, when the greater blesteth the lesse, Heb. 7. 7. they giue vnto him the honour of a great prophet.

13. *The disciples rebuked him.* If a Diademe hadde bene set vpon his head, they had willingly and with great reioycing accepted it, because that as yet they knew not his proper office. But now they account it a thing vnworthy his person to receiue children: and their errour wanted colour: for what busines hath so great a prophet and the sonne of God to doe wth children. But heere wee learne that these iudges were not vpright, which esteemed of Christe after the vnderstanding of their owne flesh: for thereof it commeth to passe that they should spoyle him of his proper gifts: and againe would attribute vnto him vnder pretence of honour those thinges which belong not vnto him. From hence sprang a great heape of superstitions, which brought a faigned Christe into the worlde. Wherefore lette vs learne not to thinke otherwise of him then hee hath taught, nor to put any other person vpon him, then was put by the fathers.

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Wee see what befell in Popery : they thought that they yeelded great honour to Christe, if they should bow themselves before a crust of bread : a stinking abomination before God . Againe, because they thought it not honourable enough for him to supply the place of an aduocate for vs, they created for them an innumerable sort of patrons : but by this meanes the honour of the mediator was taken from him.

14. *Suffer little children.* He testifieth that he is willing to receiue little children, and then taking them in his armes, he not only embraceth them, but also putting his handes vpon them, he blesteth them. Whereby we gather that his fauour also reacheth euen vnto this age . Neither is it any meruaile : for when as the whole stocke of Adam is shut vp vnder the guiltinesse of death, it is necessary that all from the greatest to the least shoulde perish : but those, which the one redeemer doeth deliuer . But to driue away that age from the grace of redemption, shoulde be too much cruelty : therefore we do not vnadvisedly hold out this buckler against the Anabaptistes . They deny Baptisme to infantes, because they are not capable of that mittery, which is their signed. We do except of the other side, sith Baptisme is a pledge and a figure of free forgiveness of sinnes, and also of adoption vnto God , it may not bee denied to infantes, whome God adopteth and washeth with the blood of his Sonne . That they obiekt that repentance and newnesse of life is there also figured, is easily answered. For they are renewed by the spirite of God, for the measure of their age, vntill by degrees in time conuenient, that vertue which is hidden in them shall encrease and shew it selfe openly. And that they contend that wee cannot be otherwise reconciled to God, and made heires of the adoption but by faith, we graunt this to be true of them that are growne in yeares : but as concerning infantes, this place proueth it to be false.

Certainly, this imposition of handes, was not a iugling nor an idle shewe, neither did Christ poure forth his prayers into the ayre in vaine : & he could not solemnly offer them vnto God, but that he would grant his prayers with out exception. And what should he request for them, but that they might be receiued amongst the Sonnes of God? whereof it followeth, that they were regenerate by the spirite into the hope of saluation. And to bee short, his embracing them declared, that Christ accounted them of his flocke. If that they were partakers of the spirituall gifts, which Baptisme figureth, it were absurde, that they shoulde be deprived of the outward signe. Thirdly, it is a sacrilegious boldnes to driue them farre from the sheepefolde of Christe, whome hee nourisheth in his owne bosome, and to cast them out as straungers, shutting the gate vpon them, whom Christe will not haue to be forbidden. *For of such,* In this woorde hee comprehendeth alwell the little ones, as them that are like them. For the Anabaptistes doe very fondly exclude children, at whome they shoulde beginne. But in the meane season he taking occasion of this present matter, exhorted his disciples, that laying by malice and pride, they shoulde put on a childish nature. Therefore it is added by Marke & Luke, that no man can enter into the kingdom of heauen, except he be borne like vnto a childe. But the admonition of Paul is to be noted in the former Epistle to the Cor. the 14. chap. & 20. verse. Be not children in vnderstanding, but in maliciouesnes.

Matth. 19.

15. And beholde one came, and said vnto him, good maister, what good things shall I do, that I may haue eternall life?

17. And he sayd vnto him, why callest thou mee good? There is none good but one, euen God, but if thou wilt enter into life, keepe the commandements.

18. Hee sayde vnto him which? And Iesus sayde, these, thou shalt not commit adultery, thou shalt not steale, thou shalt not beare false witness.

19. Honour thy Father and Mother: and thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe.

20. The young man saide vnto him, I haue obserued all these things from my youth: what lacke I yet?

21. Iesus saide vnto him, if thou wilt bee perfect, goe sell that thou hast, and giue it to the poore, and thou shalt haue treasure in heauen, and come, and follow me.

22. And when the young man heard that saying, he went away sorrowfull: for hee had great possessions.

Marke 10.

17. And when hee was out on the way, there came one running, and kneeling to him, and asked him good Maister, what shall I doe, that I may possesse eternall life?

18. Iesus said to him, Why callest thou me good? there is none good, but one, euen God.

19. Thou knowest the commandements, thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steale. Thou shalt not beare false witness. Thou shalt hurt no man.

Honour thy father & mother.

20. Then he answered and sayd to him, maister, all these things I haue obserued from my youth.

21. And Iesus behelde him, and loued him, and sayde to him, one thing is lacking vnto thee, goe and sell all that thou hast, and giue to the poore, and thou shalt haue treasure in heauen, and come follow me, and take vp the crosse.

22. But hee was sad at that saying, & went away sorrowfull: for hee hadde great possessions.

Luke 18.

18. There a certain ruler asked him saying: good maister what ought I to do, to inherite eternal life? 19. And Iesus said vnto him, why callest thou me good? none is good, save one, euen God.

20. Thou knowest the commandements, Thou shalt not commit adultery. Thou shalt not kill. Thou shalt not steale.

Thou shalt not beare false witness. Honour thy father and thy mother.

21. And he saide, all these haue I kept from my youth.

22. Nowe, when Iesus heard that, he sayde vnto him, yett lackest thou one thing: sell all that euer thou hast, & distribute vnto the poore, & thou shalt haue treasure in heauen, & come follow me.

23. But when he heard those things, he was very heauy: for hee was merueilous rich.

16. Beholde one came. Luke sayeth that hee was a ruler, that is, a manne of great authority, not one of the common people. Though riches get honour, yett it seemeth that he was esteemed as a graue and a good man. And all circumstances being considered, though he is called a young man, yett I thinke he was one of that sorte, which by a sober and chaste life reuerenced the auncient integrity. And hee came not deceitfully (as the Scribes were wont:) but with a minde to learne: and so as well in woordes, as by kneeling down he declared that he reuerenced Christ as a faithfull teacher. But againe, a blinde confidence in his woordes hindred him from profiting vnder Christ, vnto whom otherwise he desired to yelde himselfe to be taught. So at this day wee see some not euill affected: yett will hardly taste the doctrine of the Gospell: because they are caried away I know not with what shadowish holines. Further, that we may iudge the better of the estate of the answer, the manner of the question must

be noted: for he doth not simply aske by what meanes, or which way he should come to eternall life: but what good should he doe to get it. So hee dreameth of merits, whereby he would make a full recompence for eternall life, wherfore Christ very aptly sendeth him to the obseruation of the lawe, which is the certaine way to life, as I will presently more fully declare.

17. *Why callest thou me good?* I doe not take this reproofe so subtilly as a great parte of the interpreters doe, as though Christe would secretly instruct him of his godhead. For they doe thinke that these wordes doe signifie thus much, as if he should haue said, if thou knowest no higher thing in mee, then a humane nature, thou doest wrong to giue that title of good to me, which belongeth to God alone. Verely I doe grant, to speake properly, men are not woorthy of so honorable a title, no, nor the Angels: for they haue not a drop of goodnesse of themselves, but what they borowe from God. But Christ had no other purpose, then to bring his doctrine into credite: as if hee should haue sayd: thou doest euill to call me good maister, except thou doest acknowledge me to come from God. Therefore the young man is not heere instructed in the essence of the godhead, but is led to beleue the doctrine. He had now already some affection to obedience: but Christe would haue him to goe further, as to heare God speaking. For (as it is the maner of men, of deuils for the most part to make Angels) they doe generally call them good teachers, in whom they see nothing that is good: And these are as prophanings of the giftes of God. Therefore it is no maruile if Christ to get his doctrine authoritie doth call the yong man back to God. *Keepe the commandments.* Some of the old writers haue corruptly interpreted this place (whom the Papists followed) as though that Christe should teach, that by the obseruation of the law we could deserue eternal life. But christ considered not what men could doe: but answereth to the question proposed, what is the righteousness of works, which the law defineth. And certainly, so it must be holden, that God in his law comprehendeth the way to liue holily and righteously, wherein perfect righteousness is contained. Neither did Moses utter this sentence in vaine, He $\bar{\psi}$ doth these shall liue therein. Likewise I call heauen and earth to witness, that I haue this day shewed you life. Therefore it cannot be denied, but that the obseruation of the law is righteousness, whereby life may be obtained, if any man were a perfect obseruer of the lawe. But, because wee are all void of the glory of God, nothing shalbe found in the law but cursing: neither is there any other refuge for vs, then to flie to the free gift of righteousness. Therefore Paul setteth down two sortes of righteousness, the one of the lawe, the other of faith: the first he placeth in works, but the second in the mere grace of Christ. Whereby we gather that this answer of Christ was of righteousness, according to the law: for it was meete that the yong man inquiring of the righteousness of works, should first bee taught, that no man is accounted righteous, but he $\bar{\psi}$ satisfieth the law (which is impossible) that he seeing his owne infirmie might flie to the refuge of faith. Therefore I grant, sith God hath promised the reward of eternall life to the obseruers of his law, this way were to be kept, if $\bar{\psi}$ infirmie of our fleshe hindered vs not: but the scripture teacheth that it is our fault, so that it is necessary for vs to haue that by gift which wee cannot obtaine by merites. If any man obiekt that the righteousness in the law is proposed to vs in vaine, wherto no man can at any time attaine: I answer, it is not in vaine, be-

cause it

it is an instruction, whereby we are lead vnto that righteousness, which is to be had by suite. Therefore Paul, where hee sayth, that the Doers of the lawe are iustified by the righteousness of the lawe, excludeth all men. Further, this place aboliseth all those fained deuices, which the Papiſtes inuented for the obtaining of saluation. For they were not onely deceived in that, & they would binde God vnto them by their good workes, that hee should saue them of dutie or of debt, but while they prepare themselues to doe good workes, the doctrine of the law not regarded, they bend themselues to fained deuotions, as they call them: not that they doe openly refuse the lawe of God: but because they doe preferre the traditions of men farre before it. But what sayth Christ? namely, this worship onely is approued of God, which he prescribeth, because that obedience is more acceptable to him, then all their sacrifices. Therefore who so euer indeuoureth to frame his life to please Christ, while the Papiſtes are occupied in their friuolous traditions, let him imploy all his indemour in keeping the commandementes of the lawe.

18. *Thou shalt not kill.* It is maruaile when Christ would haue vs bounde to the whole law, why he onely toucheth the second table: but hee therefore doth it, because that by the duties of charitie euery mans mind is best discerned what is in it. Godliness toward God is the cheife: but, because that hypocrites doe often counterſeit the obseruation of the first table, they are best tryed by the second table. Therefore we must know that Christ chose those comandements, wherein appeareth a testimony of true righteousness: yet, by that figure Synecdoche, he noteth the whole by a part. There is no matter in that, that hee setteth the commandement of honoring the parents in the last place: for he regarded not to keepe the exact order. Yet this is worthy to be noted, that hee putteth it in the second table, least any man should bee deceived by that error of Iosephus, who thought that it appertained to the first table. That which is after added in the ende: Thou shalt loue thy neighbour, is nothing diuerſe from the former commandements, but it is a generall exposition of them all.

19. *The young man sayde vnto him.* The lawe might haue bene deade to him, when as hee dreamed that hee was so righteous: for, except he had flattered himſelte through hypocrisie, this had bene a very good admonition towardes the learning of humilitie, to see his owne blottes and fautes in the glaſſe of the lawe. But he being drunken with a foolish boldnes, carelesly boasted that he had well discharged his dutie euen from his childehoode. Paul confessed that he was in the same case, and that he was perswaded that he so liued so long as hee knewe not the force of the lawe: but after that he felt the power of the lawe, hee was deadly wounded thereby. Therefore Christes answer, which followeth was directed to the affection of the manne. Yet Christe required nothing of him but the commandementes of the lawe: but, because the simple rehearſall of them moued him nothing, he discouereth in other words his secret diſease of conetouſnesſe. I grant it is not commaunded in any place of the lawe, that wee shoulde sell all: but when as the ende of the lawe is to drawe menne to the denyall of themſelues, and expreſſly condemneth luſt, wee ſee that Christe had no other purpose, then to correcte that false perſuaſion of the young man. For if he had throughly knowne himſelfe, at the hearing

ring of the lawe rehearsed, hee woulde haue confessed himselfe in daunger of Gods iudgement.

Now, because the simple woordes of the lawe doe not sufficiently conuince him of his guiltinesse, hee declareth the inward sence in other woordes. For if Christ should now require any other thing besides the commaundements of the lawe, he should be contrary to himselfe. He taught euen now that perfect righteousnes was comprehended in the commaundementes of the lawe: howe therefore should it agree for him to reprocue the law for default? Further, that protestation of Moses, which I cited before had beene false. Therefore christes meaning was not, that the young man wanted one thing besides the obseruation of the law, but one thing in the obseruation of the law. For, though the law doth in noe place compell vs to sell all: yet, because it bringeth all our corrupt lustes to nothing, because it teacheth vs to beare the crosse, because it would haue vs to be ready to abyde hunger and penury, the young man is farre from the full obseruation of the same, so long as he is caried away with the loue of his riches. And he saith one thing wanted, because hee had no neede to speake of whoredome and murder. but hee noteth the speciall disease, as if hee should touch the byle with his finger. And it is to be noted that he doth not only commaund him to sell, but to giue to the poore: for to reiecte riches were of it selfe no vertue, but a vaine ambition. Crates the Theban is commended by the prophane historiographers, because he cast his money and what precious thing soeuer he had into the sea, for that he thought hee could not be safe, except hee destroyed his riches. As though it had not beene better for him: to haue bestowed that vpon others, which hee thought superfluous for himselfe. Certainly, when as charitie is the bond of perfection, hee that defraudeth himselfe and others of the vse of money, deserueth no prayse. Therefore Christ doeth not simply commend the selling, but the liberalitie in helping the poore. Christ also vrgeth further the mortification of the flesh, when he saith *follow me*: For he doth not only commaund him to giue him his name, but to put his shoulders to the bearing of the Crosse, as Marke doeth expresly expound it. And it was meete that hee should be thus launced: because that when hee was at home, hee was wont to liue pleasantly vnder the shadow and in idlenesse, he had neuer conceiued, or had taste very little, what it shoulde meane to crucifie the old man, and to tame the lusts of the flesh. But the Monkes are too ridiculous, while vnder pretence of this place, they challenge to themselues the taste of perfection. Firste, it is easie to vnderstand, that it is not commaunded to all menne without difference to sell all. For the husband-mian, which is accustomed to liue of his labour, and thereby to nourish his children, shoulde sinne, if hee shoulde sell this small portion of land, not being compelled thereto by necessitie. Therefore it is better to keepe that, which God hath put into our handes, so that wee doe modestly and thriftily maintaine our selues and our household, and giue some part to the poore, then wastefully to spoyle all. But what a goodly selling is this, which the Monks doe so much brag of? When as a great number, which can not finde foode at home, thrust themselues into monasteries, as into swines sties full stuffed. All men doe carefully spare from themselues, that these idle bellies might be fatted with other mens bread.

A notable chaunge surely, when they being commaunded to giue to the poore that which they rightly possesse, they are not content with their owne, but take away other mens.

M A R. 21. *Iesus beheld him, and loued him.* That which the Papistes do hereof gather, that good morall woorkes, (which are not wrought by the instinct of the spirite, but goe before regeneration) doe of right deserue, is too childish a deuise. For, if they gather a desert of the loue of God, we may say that frogs and flies doe deserue: because God loueth all his creatures, without exception. Therefore it is needfull to distinguish the degrees of loue. In respect of this present place it shall bee sufficient to know that God loueth none with a fatherly loue, but his owne sonnes, whom he hath regenerate with the spirit of adoption: and by this loue it commeth to passe, that they shall be approued before his tribunall seate. According to this sence, to be beloued of God, and to be iustified before him are both one in signification. But God is sayd somtimes to loue them, whom he neither alloweth nor loueth: for because the preseruatiō of mankind is acceptable vnto him (which consisteth in iustice, equity, moderation, wilddom, faith, and temperaunce) he is said to loue the publike vertues: not that they doe merit saluation or grace: but because they tend to that ende, which he alloweth. In this sence, according to diuers respects, he loued & hated Aristides & Fabritius: for in as much as he had adorned them with an outward righteousness, & that for the common good, hee loved his owne worke in them: yet, because the heart was corrupt, that outward shew of righteousnesse auailed them nothing to the obtaining of righteousness. For we know that the hearts are purged onely by sayth, & that the spirit of vprightnes is giuen only to the members of christ. So the questiō is answered, how it could be that christ shuld loue a man that was proud, and an hypocrite, when nothing is more odious before God then these two vices. Neither is it any absurditie that God shuld loue that good seede, which he put into some natures, so that he yet reiecteth the persons and the workes for their corruption.

M A T. 22. *Hee went away sorrowfull.* The departure sheweth at length how farre the young man was from the perfection, whereto Christ called him. For how cometh it to passe that he withdraweth himselfe from christes schoole, but because it was a grieve to him to forsake his riches? But if we be not ready to beare pouerty, it is euident that luste doeth yet raigne in vs. And this is that, which I said before, that Christ commaunded to sell all, was not an addition to the lawe, but a tryall of the sinne that lay hid. For as euery man is more giuen to this or to that sinne, so by the reprehending of the same he is the more layde open.

Further, this exāple teacheth vs that to continue cōstantly in christes schoole, it is conuenient to renounce the flesh. This young man departed from Christ, who brought with him both a desire to learne, & modesty: because it was hard for him to leaue that vice, wherewith he was acquainted. The same shall befall to vs, except the sweetnes of the grace of Christ do make all the intisements of the flesh vsuauory to vs. Whether this temptation were but for a time, so þ̄ the yong mā afterward repented, it is vnknowne: yet by coniecture it is probable, that he was drawne away by his couetousnesse, that he should not profit any thing.

Math. 19.

Mathew. 19

Mar. 10.

Luke 18

23. Then Iesus sayd vnto his disciples, verely, I say vnto you, that a rich man shall hardly enter into the kingdome of heauen

24. And againe I say vnto you, it is easer for a Camell to goe through the eye of a needle, then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of God.

25. And when his disciples heard it, they were exceedingly amased, saying, who then can be saued?

26. And Iesus beheld them, and sayde vnto them, with men this is vnpossible. but with God all things are possible.

23. And Iesus looked round about and said vnto his disciples, howe hardly do they that haue riches enter into the kingdome of God?

24. And his disciples were astonied at his wordes. But Iesus answered againe, and sayde vnto them, Children, howe hard is it for them that trust in riches, to enter into the kingdome of God?

25. It is easer for a Camell to goe through the eye of a needle, then for a riche man to enter into the kingdome of God.

26. And they were much more astonied, saying with themselves, who then can be saued?

27. But Iesus looked vpon them and sayde, with men it is impossible but not with God: for with GOD all things are possible.

24. And when Iesus saw him sorrowfull, hee sayde, with what difficulty shall they that haue riches enter into the kingdome of God?

25. Surely it is easer for a Camell to goe through a needles eie then for a rich man to enter into the kingdome of God.

26. Then said they that hearde it, and who then can bee saued?

27. And hee sayde, the things which are vnpossible with men, are possible with god

23. *A rich man shall hardly enter.* Christ doeth not declare how noysome and deadly a plague couetousnes is, but also howe great hinderance riches doe bring. Marke asswageth the sharpnesse of the saying, while he applyeth it onely to them which put their trust in riches. But I thinke that the former sentence is rather confirmed by these words, then corrected: as if he should say, that it should not seeme maruailous to them, that riche men haue so harde entrance into the kingdome of heauen: for it is a common disease almost of all men, to trust in their riches. This doctrine is also very profitable for all men: namely, to rich men, as that they being admonished before of their danger, should take heede: to poore menne, that they shoulde bee content with their estate, and not so couetously desire that, which will bee more to their harme then to their gain. It is certaine that riches of it selfe do not hinder vs from following: but (such is the corruption of man) that they which haue abundance canne scarcely escape from drowning themselves therein. So that they which flow with riches are holden bounde by Sathan, as it were in chaines, that they shoulde not looke vp into heauen: nay, they entrench, binde and enthrall themselves wholly to the earth. The similitude of the Camell, which hee addeth a little after, amplifieth the difficultie. for it declareth that rich men do swel & are more puffed vp with pride & vaine boldnes, so that they cannot suffer themselves to be brought into such straites, as God doth keepe his children.

I thinke that by this word *Camel* is rather noted a great rope for a ship, then a beaſt.

25. *And when his diſciples heard it.* The diſciples doe maruaile: for this ſhould not make vs a litle carefull, conſidering & riches do ſtop vp the entrance into the kingdome. For which way ſoeuer wee ſhall turne our eyes, a thouſand ſtops wil ſet themſelues againſt vs. But let vs note that they were ſo amafed, that yet they fled not from the doctrine of Chriſt. He of whom mention was made euen now dealt otherwiſe: for the ſtraightnes of the commandement ſo feared him, that he diuorced himſelfe from Chriſt: but though theſe men bee amafed, and doe aſke who then can be ſaued, yet they bende not their courſe an other way, but deſire to vanquiſh the doubtfull hope. So it ſhall profit vs to feare the threatninges of God, ſo oft as hee denounceth any hard or fearetull thing: ſo that our mindes faint not, but rather be ſtirred vp.

26. *With men this is vnpoſſible.* Chriſt doeth not altogether ſet their mindes free from all care: becauſe it was profitable for them to vnderſtand how hard it is to aſcend into heauen. Firſt, that they might employ all their endeouours to this purpoſe: then, that they diſtruſting themſelues might ſeek for helpe from heauen. Wee ſee how ſluggiſh and careleſſe we be. What ſhould befall, if the faithfull ſhould thinke that they ſhould walke pleaſantly, through a ſoſte and pleaſant plaine, for recreation? This therefore is the cauſe, why Chriſt doth not extenuate the danger (that he might thereby put his diſciples out of feare) but rather increaſeth it. For, whereas before he had onely ſayd that it was hard, now he ſayth, it is impoſſible.

Whereby it appeareth that they are very prepoſterouſ teachers, which are ſo afraid to ſpeake hardly, that they giue libertie to the ſluggiſh fleſhe. But it were better to follow the rule of Chriſt, who ſo tempereth his ſpeech, that he might teach men that are throwne downe in themſelues, only to reſeſt themſelues in the grace of God, and withall that hee might ſtirre them vp to prayers. So hee doth wiſely helpe the infirmity of men, not by attributing any thing vnto them but by ſtirring vp the mindes to hope in the grace of God. And by this anſwere of Chriſt is that generall rule reſelld (which the Papiſts gathered out of Hierome.) Who ſoeuer ſhall ſay that the law is hard to be kept, let him be accuſed. For Chriſt doth plainly declare, that it is not poſſible for men to keepe the way to ſaluation, but ſo far as the grace of GOD doeth helpe and direct them.

Mathevv. 19.

Marke 10.

Luke 18.

27. Then answered Peter, and ſaide to him, Behold, we haue forſaken al, and followed thee: what ſhall wee haue?

28. And Ieſus ſayd vnto them, verely I ſay to you, that

28. Then Peter beganne to ſay vnto him, Loe, wee haue forſaken all, & haue followed thee.

29. Ieſus answered and ſaid, verely I ſay vnto you, there is no man that hath forſaken

28. Then Peter ſaid, Lo, we haue left all, and haue followed thee.

29. And he ſayd vnto them, verely I ſay vnto you, there is no man that hath left houſe, or parents, or brethre, or wiſe, or chil-

that when the sonne of man shall sit in the throne of his maiestie, yee which followed mee in the regeneration, shall sitte also vpon the twelue thrones, and iudge the twelue tribes of Israel.

29. And whosoener shall forsake houses, or brethren, or sisters, or father or mother, or wife, or children, or landes, for my names sake, he shall receiue an hundred foldes more, and shall inherit euerlasting life.

30. But many that are first shall be last, and the last shall be first.

saken house, or brethren, or sisters, or father, or mother, or wife or children, or landes for my sake & the Gospels.

30. But hee shall receiue an hundred foldes, now at this present: houses, and brethren, and sisters, and mothers, and children, & landes with persecutions, and in the world to come life euerlasting. But manie that are first, shall be last, and the last first.

children for the kingdom of Gods sake.

30. Which shall not receiue much more in this worlde, and in the world to come life euerlasting.

Luke 22.

28. And ye are they which haue continued with me in my temptations.

29. Therefore I appoynt vnto you a kingdom, as my father hath appointed vnto me

30. That ye may eate & drinke at my table in my kingdom, and sit on seates, and iudge the twelue tribes of Israel.

Peter doth secretly compare himselfe and the other disciples with that rich man, whome the worlde had alienated from Christ, And because they led a poore and wandring life not without reproofe and troubles, neither did there appeare any shew of a better estate in time to come: hee demandeth, and not without cause, whether they haue left all, and followed Christ in vaine. For it were an absurd thing for them to be spoyled, and not to be better recompenced by the Lord. But what were those all things? For, when as they were base & poore men, they scarce had a house to leaue: therefore this bragging might seeme to bee ridiculous, And certainly experience sheweth how greatly men doe commonly esteeme of their duties towardes God. As at this day they which were almost ready to begge in popery, doe proudly cast forth that they haue lost much for the cause of the Gospel: yet the Disciples may bee excused, for though their estate was neuer gorgious, yet they liued at home of their handie occupations, as the richest of them all. And wee know that poore menne accustomed to a quiet and honest life, are hardlyer drawne from their wiues and children, then those men, which are caried by ambition, or that are drawn hither and thither with the blast of prosperitie. And except there had been some reward layd vp for them, they did very fondly to change the matter of their life. But as they were in this behalfe to be excused, yet herein they offended, that they desire now to see triumph, when they had not yet gone through the warfare.

If at any time wee doe loath and bee vnpatient, that the time or triumph is delayde, let vs learne first to consider the solaces, wherewith the Lorde asswageth the bitternesse of the crosse in this worlde: then to stirre

vpour felues with the hope of eternall life. For in these two pointes is the answer of Christ contain'd.

M A T. 28. *Verely, I say vnto you.* Least the Disciples should thinke they had lost their labour, and repent them of the course they had begun, Christ teacheth them that the glory of his kingdome, which as then was hid, should be reuealed as if he should say, there is no cause why you should faint at this your base estate. For I, who doe fearfully lie amongst the meanest will at the length ascend into a throne of maiestie. Therefore beare a litle, vntill the time of manifesting of my glory shall come. But what doth he then promise them? Namely, that they shal be fellowes of the same glory. For by giuing them thrones, wherein they should iudge the twelue tribes of Israel, he compareth them to Ambassadors, or to cheife counsellors and presidents, which haue the cheife seates in the king's assembly. Wee know that the Apostles were chosen twelue in number, that so it might be declared that God by the sending of Christ woulde gather together the disperfed remanentes of his people. This was the cheefe dignitie, but as yet it was hidden: therefore Christ deferreth their desires vnto the last manifestation of his kingdome, that then they might receiue the fruit of their election. yet it is not to bee doubted, but that Christe spake in this place of the latter day. *In the regeneration.* Some doe referre this point, to that which followeth in the text. So regeneration should be nothing else but the newnesse, which should follow our rectoring, while that which is mortall shall bee swallowed vp of life, and our weak body shal be made like to the heavenly glory of Christ. But I doe rather referre this regeneration to the first coming of Christ, because the world then began to be renewed, and the Church sprang vp out of the darknesse of death into the light of life. And this maner of speaking is found euery wherein the Prophets, and doth very well agree with the circumstance of this place. For the renewing of the Church so often promised, made them hope, for some great happines, when as the Messias shoulde appeare. Christ, therefore that he might take away that errour, distinguisheth betweene the beginning & the ende of his kingdome.

L V K. 28. *You are they.* Though Luke seemeth to report this speach of Christ diuersly, and as if it were spoken at an other time: yet I thinke not otherwise, but that it appertaineth to this time. Neither is there set downe a continual Sermon or speach of christ, but diuerse sentences set together without regard of the order of the time, as shal againe be sayd a litle after. But he vseth mo words then Mat. for sith the Apostles followed him in his temptations, and continued constant, he sayth that they shal be partakers with him of his glory. It is demanded what he meaneth by these temptations? I thinke that he meant those troubles, where with God generally exercised him and his Apostles. And hee doeth very aptly vse this word *Temptations*: for euen according to the sense of the humane nature his faith and patience was proued.

29. *I appoynted vnto you a kingdome.* He doth not onely make them rulers heere. but kinges, for hee imparteth with them the kingdome which hee receiued of his father. But there is a greater vehemency in that worde *I appoynt*, that they shoulde not with a rashe and houle desire make too much haste to possesse

possesse that kingdome, whereof hee onely had the lawfull authoritie of ordaining: and he exhorteth them to patience by his example. For though his father had made him a king, yet he is not perfectly placed in his glory: nay he humbled himselfe, and through the shame of the crosse hee obtained the kingly honour. To eate and to drinke vpon his table is metaphorically put for this, that they should be followers of all his glory.

M A T. 29. *Who soeuer shall forsake.* After hee had stirred vp their mindes to hope for the life to come, he also encourageth them with present comforts, and confirmeth and strengtheneth them to beare the crosse. For though God suffereth his to be much afflicted, yet he doth neuer forsake them, but hee will recompence their sorrowes with his helpes. Neither doth he onely speake to his Apostles, but taking this occasion, hee generally directeth his speech to all the godly. This is the summe: they that shall willingly lose all things for Christes sake, shall yet euē in this life be more blessed then if they had kept all, but the cheife rewarde is laid vp for them in heauen. Yet that promise of recompensing of an hundred fold, seemeth not to agree with that wee see in experience. For they which for the most part are spoyled of parents, or children, and other kinsmen, or are depriv'd of their wiues, and robbed of their goodes for the testimony of Christe, are so farre from recouering their owne goods, that as people without company and forsaken, they should painefully and hardly trauell in banishment with great want and pouerty. I answer, if any man do rightly esteeme the present grace of God, wherewith he comforteth and lifeth them vp in their miseries, he will grant that is rightly preferred before all the riches of the world. For though the vnfaithfull doe flourish, yet because they know not what shall become of them to morow, it is necessary that they should alwayes be doubtful and afrayde: neither can they otherwise enioy their pleasures, but that after a sorte they are amazed at themselves. In the meane season God maketh his merrie, so that the lile good, which they enioy is more worth vnto them, and farre more pleasant, then if without Christ great aboundance of goodes should flowe vpon them. In which sense I take that word was added in Marke *with persecutions*, as if Christ should haue sayde: though the godly in this worlde doe alwayes suffer persecutions, and that the crosse doeth alwayes cleaue as it were to the backe of them: yet the saue of Gods grace is so sweete, which maketh them so merry, that their estate is more to bee desired then the pleasures and dainties of kings.

30. *Many that are first.* This sentence was added to teach vs to shake off the sluggishness of the flesh. The Apostles hastned now to their reward when as they were scarce come forth into the race. And we all are of this disposition almost, that if we haue passed one month in seruice, we all desire to be rewarded and set at liberty, as if we had bene very seruiceable soldours, and hadde well deserved. But Christ exhorteth them that beganne well to goe on forward courageously, and withall he warneth them that runne, and beganne very freshly, that they shall auail nothing, if they saynte in the middle of the race. As Paule also declareth, all that runne, obtrayne not the pryce, 1 Corinthyans, **9. 24.** And in another place by his owne example, that they shoulde forgette those thinges which are behinde, and to endeavour to the

other parte of the course, which is before . Philippians, 3. 13. Therefore as ofte as wee doe thinke of the heauenly crowne, it becommeth vs to be pricked forward as it were with newe spurres, that we become not duller hereafter.

Matth. 20.

Marke.

Lnke.

1. For the kingdome of heauen is like vnto a certaine housholder, which went out at the dawninge of the day, to hyer labourers into his Vinegarde.

2. And he agreed with the labourers for a penny a day, and sent them into his vineyard.

3. And he went out about the third houre, & sawe others standing ydle about the market place,

4. And sayd vnto them, goe yee also into my vineyard, and what soeuer is right, I will giue you: & they went their way.

5. Again hee went out about the sixth or nyenth houre, and did likewise.

6. And he went about the eleuenth houre, and found other standing idle, and said vnto them, why stand ye here all the day idle?

7. They sayde vnto him, because no manne hath hyred vs. He sayd to them, go ye also into my vinegarde, and what soeuer is right, that shall yee receiue.

8. And when euen was come, the maister of the vineyard said vnto his stewarde, call the labourers, and giue them their hyre, beginning at the last, till thou come to the first.

9. And they which were hyred aboute the eleuenth houre, came and receiued euery manne a peny.

10. Nowe, when the first came, they supposed that they should receiue more, but they likewise receiued euery man a peny.

11. And when they had receiued it, they murmured against the maister of the house:

12. Saying, these last haue wrought but one houre, & thou hast made them equall vnto vs, which haue borne the burden and beate of the day.

13. And he answered one of them, saying, friend, I doe thee no wrong: didst thou not agree with mee for a peny?

14. Take that which is thine owne, and goe thy way: I will giue vnto this last, as much as to thee.

15. B

15. Is it not lawefull for mee to doe as I will with mine owne? Is thine eye euill, because I am good?
16. So the last shall be first, and the first last: for many are called, and few are chosen.

Sith this parable is nothing else but a cōfirmation of the sentence going next before, *The first shall be last*, let vs now see how it is to be applyed. Some interpreters doe gather this to be the summe of it. Because the heavenly inheritance is not obtayned by merites of workes, but is giuen freely, they shall bee all equall in glory. But Christe doeth not dispute eyther of the equalitie of the heavenly glory, or what the estate of the godly shall be: but he only sayth this, that there is no cause why they, which are first in time, should glory or bragge ouer others. For the Lord as oit as he please can call them, whom hee seemed to neglect for a time, & eyther to make them equall, or to preferre them before them which were first.

It should be but foolish curiositie, if any man would exactly discusse all the particular poyntes of this parable. Therefore no more must bee sought, then it was Christes purpose to deliuer. Also we haue shewed alreadie, that he applied himselfe to no other ende, but to prouoke his as it were with continuall spurres to goe forward. We know that sluggishnes doth for the most part arise of too much confidence. So it commeth to passe, that many as if they had got to the ende of the race, doe faint in the midst of the course. Therefore Paule commaundeth vs to forget those thinges, which are behind vs, that we considering what there is yet remaining for vs, shoulde prepare our selues to runne lustily. Yet it shall not bee hurtfull to run through the wordes, that the doctrine may thereby more euidently appeare.

1. *For the kingdom of heauen is like.* The meaning is, that the same account is to be made of the calling of God, as if any man should hire labourers in the morning for certaine wages, to dresse his vineyard, and then should afterwards send some without couenant, to whom he yet giueth like rewarde or hire. And hee doth therefore make mention of the kingdom of heauen: because he compareth the spirituall life to the earthly, and the reward of eternall life to money, wherewith men are paid their wages for their labours, which they haue done. Some do subtilly apply this place, as if christ should distinguish between thee Iewes & the Gentiles: for they say that the Iewes were called at the first houre, and had a rewarde promised by couenant: because the Lord promised them eternall life, vpon condition if they performed the law. But in calling of the Gentiles, there was no couenant made especially of workes: because saluation was giuen them freely in Christ. But all these subtilties are to no purpose: for there was no difference in the couenant which God made, but onely in the time, for that they which went into the vineyard in the euening, receiued the same rewarde as they did, which came first. For though God in times past promised in the lawe a rewarde of workes to the Iewes: yet, wee knowe that this tooke not effect: because that no man could at any time obtaine saluation by his owne merites. Why then (shall some man say) doth Christ expressly make mention of a couenant, speaking of the first, and sayeth nothing of it when hee speaketh of the other? Namely, that hee might teach that no manne is injured by this,

that the latter haue as much honour, as if they had bene called at the first. For in proper speech hee oweth nothing to any man: and of his owne right he chal-
 lengeth of vs (whom he hath tyed vnto himselfe) what soeuer obedience we
 are able to yeelde vnto him. But, because he doth freely offer vs a rewarde, hee
 is sayd to hyre our labours, which otherwise are due to him. Heereof it com-
 meth to passe, that he also calleth the crowne, which he giueth vs freely by the
 name of a rewarde. Further more that he might declare that we haue no cause to
 quarrell with God, if hee ioine others with vs, which came long after vs, as fel-
 lowes in honour, he boroweth the similitude of the custome of men, who first
 doe agree of the wages, beefore they sende the labourers to worke. But if any
 man will hereby gather, that men are created to labour, and that euery man hath
 his charge inioyned him of God, that men should not be slouthfull and idle, he
 shall not wrest Chrittes wordes at all. Also it may be gathered, that our whole
 life is vnprofitable, and may rightly bee condemned for slouthfulness vntill the
 wee frame our liues according to the commandement and calling of the Lord.
 Whereof it followeth that they auayle nothing in toying, which do rashly take
 vpon them this or that kinde of life, and waight not for the allowance of their
 calling from God. Lastly, it is to be gathered out of the wordes of Christ, that
 they do please god, which do labor to profit the brethren. It seemeth that a peny
 (which is somewhat more in value then foure French Caroleys) was the ordinary
 hire for a dayes worke. The houres 3, sixe and nine are therefore mentioned:
 because that the day was wont in times past to be deuided from sunne rising to
 sunne setting into twelue houres, so was there an other diuision of the day by
 three houres: so againe did they deuide the night into foure watches. There-
 fore the eleuenth houre signifieth the end of the day.

8. *And when euen was come.* There is no mysterie to bee sought in this,
 that the maister commandeth to begin at the last, as though God would crown
 them first, which were in course of time last. For this deuise should not agree
 with the doctrine of Paule, who sayth, that they, which remaine at the com-
 ming of Christ, shall not preuent them, which slept before in Christ, but shall
 follow.

Christe nowe in this place setteth it downe in a diuerse order: because hee
 coule not otherwise declare (that which hee after added) that the firste mur-
 mured, because they had no more giuen them. Note also that he doth not say
 that there shoulde bee such murmuring at the latter day, but onely denieth that
 there shalbe any cause of murmuring. For the faigned person, which hee bring-
 geth in, in the similitude, giueth no small light to this doctrine, that the libera-
 tie of God is subiect to no complaintes of men, though he adorne with large
 rewardes the vnworthie, they haue deserued nothing. In vaine therefore doe
 some imagine, that the Iewes were reprov'd in these wordes, who were mali-
 cious and enuious against the Gentiles. For it were absurd to make such equall
 in rewarde with the Sonnes of God. And this wickednesse lighteth not vpon
 the faithfull so to murmur against GOD. But the meaning is plaine, that
 it is free for GOD, sith hee defraudeth no man of his iust rewarde, to bee-
 stowe vpon them, whome he lately called with a rewarde, which was vnde-
 serued.

18. So the last shall be first. Hee doeth not heere compare the Iewes with the Gentiles, as he doth otherwhere: nor the reprobate, which fall away from the faith, with the elect, which dee perseuer. Therefore the sentence which is added by some, *Many are called, but few are chosen*, doth not agree with it. Christe only willed, that as any man is called before others, so he would runne the race with more diligence: then he exhorteth all men to modestie, that some should not preferre themselves before others, but that they should willingly admit the to the common price. The Apostles, because they were the first suites of the whole Church, seemed to challenge some notable thing to themselves: and Christ denied them not, but that they should sit as iudges to iudge the twelue tribes of Israel. But least ambitio or vaine confidence in themselves should make them swell, they were withall to be warned, that others which were called long tyme after them, should be partakers of the same glory: because God is bound to no man, but calleth freely whom soeuer hee pleaseth, and giueth vnto them that are called, such reward as pleaseth him.

Matth. 10.

17. And Iesus went vp to Ierusalem, and tooke the twelue disciples aparte in the way, & said vnto the,
18. Behold, wee goe vp to Ierusalem, & the sonne of man shall be deliuered vnto the chiefe Priestes, & vnto the Scribes, and they shall condemne him to death.
19. And shall deliver him to the Gentiles, to mocke, & to scourge, and to crucifie him: but the third day he shall rise againe.

Marke 10.

32. And they were in the way, going vp to Ierusalem: and Iesus went before them, and they were amazed, and as they followed, they were afraid, and Iesus tooke the twelue againe, and began to tell them what things should come to him.
33. Saying, beholde, wee goe to Ierusalem, and the sonne of man shall be deliuered vnto the high Priestes, and Scribes, and they shall condemne him to death, and shall deliver him to the Gentiles.
34. And they shall mock him, and scourge him, and spitte vpon him, and kill him: but the third day hee shall rise againe.

Luke 18.

31. Then Iesus tooke vnto him the twelue, & said vnto them, beholde, wee goe vp to Ierusalem, and all things shall be fulfilled to the sonne of man, that are written by the Prophets.
32. For he shall be deliuered vnto the Gentiles, and shall be mocked, and shall be spightfully entreated, and shall be spitted on.
33. And when they have scourged him, they wil put him to death: but the third day hee shall rise againe.
34. But they vnderstoode none of these things: and this saying was hid fro them, neither perceived they the things which were spoken.

Though the Apostles had bin taught before how the Lord should depart, yet because they had not profited as was meet, he rehearseth now againe, that which he had often saide. Hee seeth that the day of death draweth neere: yea, that the time is now at hand, whe he should offer vp himselfe to be sacrificed. & he seeth his disciples not only afraid, but euē astonied with a blind feare. Therefore he exhorteth the to constancy, least they would faint at the temptation. Further, he confirmeth them two wayes. For in that he telleth them before what should

come to passe afterwarde, hee doeth not onely strengthen them, least they being compassed with so diuine troubles not looked for, should be ouer throwne: but hee opposeth the manifestiion of his Godhead against the offence of the crosse; least that shorte time that hee should be throwne downe should discourage them, whereat they should be perswaded that he was the sonne of God: and therefore the conqueror of death. The seconde reason hee vseth to confirme them, is gathered of the neerenesse of the resurrection. But it is good to looke neerer into the words. Marke declareth that which the other two conceale, and as well the Apostles as other their companions, were heauy, and afraid, before that Christe tooke his Apostles aparte, and tolde them, that hee went presently to the sacrifice of death. But it is vncertaine why they were thus afraid, except it was because they had tryed before, that they had great aduersaries at Ierusalem. Therefore they had rather that Christe should take his ease in some backe place, out of the reach or cast of the darts, then willingly to offer himselfe into the handes of so deadly enemies. And though this feare was many wayes corrupted, yet this was no small token of obedience and godlinesse, that they followed Christe. It had bene much better, if they had followed gladly and cheerefully whether soeuer the sonne of God would haue led them: but this reuerence is prayse worthy, that they had rather abide troubles themselves, then they would forsake him.

17. *He tooke the twelve.* It might seeme merueilous, when as all had neede of comfort; (for they were all afraid) why hee made onely the twelue priuy of his secreete. But I thinke that he would not therefore speake of it openly, least the rumor thereof should be spread far abroad before the time. Further, when as hee hadde no hope of good to bee wrought presently by his admonition, hee thought it sufficient to commit the same to a fewe, which should afterwarde be witneses of the same. For, as the seede cast into the earth, doeth not presently bring forth fruite, so we know that Christ spake many thinges to his Apostles, which brought not forth fruit presently. If that hee had admitted all without choyce to this speach, it might haue bene that many for feare would haue fled away, and haue filled the common peoples eares with this rumor. So the death of Christ should haue bin without glory, which he so rashly seemed to go vnto. Therefore he speaketh secretly to his Apostles: & yet he chose not the as such as were fit to profit thereby, but (as I touched euen now) that they might afterward be witneses of the same. But Luke dealeth more fully in this behalfe: for hee doth not only declare that christ foretold these things, which were at hand: but the doctrine which he added withal, that those things, were fulfilled in the sonne of man, which were written by the Prophets. For this was the best remedy to overcome the temptatiō, to haue some marks or notes euen in the shame of the crosse, wherby the prophets had noted the promised sauour. Now it is not to be doubted, but that the Lorde shewed also out of the Prophets, what profit they should hope for by his death. For the Prophets doe not onely teach that Christ should suffer: but they adde the cause, that he might reconcile the world to god.

18. *Beholde, wee goe vppes to Ierusalem.* Heereby wee perceiue that Christ was armed with diuine force for the conquering of the terrors of death. who witting & willing hastened to meete death. For why shuld he without cōpulsion.

goe.

goe to that bloody butchery : but because the inuincible power of the spirite, vanquishing feare, hadde exalted him aboue all humane affections. But in that he toucheth the circumstances more nearly, he doth therein giue a more cūidēt declaration of his Godhead. For he could not by his humanity pesse, that after he was condemned of the Priests and Scribes, hee should bee deliuered to the Gentiles, that being entreated with spiritings vppon, and other reproches, he should bee beaten with whips, and at length be caried to the punishment of the crosse. And it is to be noted, that though the Lord knew the infirmitie, yet hee would not hide the most grieuous offence. For as we sayde before, there could nothing haue befallen more to the shaking of the mindes of the godly, then to see all the holy order of the Church against Christ. Yet to deeme or to beare with their infirmitie, he spareth not, but doth freely declare the matter it selfe, & sheweth the maner how to ouercome the temptatiō. that is, that they shuld certainly looke for the resurrection : but because it was necessary that he shuld first die, he appoynteth the by hope in the meane season to waite for their triumphe.

24. But they vnder stood none of these things. What blockishnes was this not to vnderstand those things which Christ tolde them so plainly and familiarly, of no high nor hidden matter: but such, as they of themselves might haue conceived some suspition of. But here it behooueth also to remember, that which I spake other where, they were therefore holden in so great ignorance, because that when they had imagined that they should haue a ioyfull & a happy iourney, they accounted it for a great absurdity, that Christ should so reprochfully bee crucified. Whereby wee gather how much the mindes of men are bewitched with such false imagination, wherefore we must be the more heedfull, least we being tangled with such deuises, become blinde in the light.

Matth. 10.
 10. Then came to him the mother of Zebedeus children, with her sonnes worshipping him, and desiring a certaine thing of him
 21. And he sayde vnto her, what wouldst thou? She sayde to him: Graunt that these my two sonnes, may sit the one at thy right hand, and the other at thy left hand in thy kingdome.
 22. And Iesus answered and sayde: yee know not what yee aske. Are yee able to drinke of the cup that I shall drinke of, and to bee baptised with the baptisme that I shall be baptised with? They said to him, we are able.
 23. And he said vnto them ye shall drinke in deede of my cuppe and

Marke 10.
 35. Then Iames and Iohn, the sonnes of Zebedeus came vnto him saying: Maister, wee woulde that thou shouldst doe for vs that wee desire.
 36. And he said vnto them: what would you I should doe for you?
 37. And they said vnto him: grant vnto vs, that wee may sitte one at thy right hand, & the other at thy left hand in thy glory.
 38. But Iesus sayde vnto them: you know not what you aske. Canne yee drinke of the cuppe, that I shall drinke of, and be baptised with the baptisme that I shall bee baptised with?
 39. And they sayd vnto him: wee can. But Iesus sayd vnto them, yee shall

Luke.

and shall be baptised with the baptisme that I am baptised with: but to sit at my right hand, and at my left hand, is not mine to giue: but it shall be giuen to them, for whom it is prepared of my father.

shall drinke in deepe of the cuppe that I shall drinke of, and bee baptised with the baptisme wherewith I shal be baptised. 40. But to sitte at my right hand, & at my left is not mine to giue: but it shall be giuen to them, for whom it is prepared.

This history containeth a notable spectacle of the vanity of man. For it teacheth that true & godly zeale is often mixed with ambition or some other corruption of the fleshe: so that they which follow Christe, doe looke some other where then becommeth them. Further, they doe wander farre out of the way, which are not content with Christ alone, but seeke this thing or that thing besides him and his promises. Neither is it sufficient to apply the mind simply to Christ at the first, except there be alwayes a continuance of the same puritie: because that corrupt affections do often creepe vpon vs in the midste of the race, and draw vs backe into some crooked path. As it is credibly to be supposed that Zebedeus two sonnes professed Christ sincerely at the first: but when they saw themselves in no small credit with him, and here mention made that he is toward a kingdom, their mindes are presently caried to a wicked desire, and they loath to remaine simply in their office. If this befalleth to the two chiefe disciples, it behooveth vs to walke very carefully, if we will not fall from the right course. Especially where any apt occasion offeth it selfe, heed must be taken least the conetousnes of honours shuld infect or poyson the desire of godlines. But though Mat. & Mark do somewhat differ in words, yet they agree in the substance of the matter. Mat. sayth that Zebedeus wife came & made request for her sonnes, that they might be placed first in the kingdom of Christ. Mark bringeth in them making the request themselves. But it is probable that they being ashamed to do it themselves, did craftily set their mother forwardes, who might the more boldly demaund it. But that the motion came fro them, it is gathered of this, that Christ answereth them, and not the mother. Also that the mother humbly shewed that she had somewhat to aske, before she would vtter what she had in her minde. And they also in Marke doe generally condition, that they would haue graunted them what soeuer they shoulde desire. This fearefull insinuation tellifieth that they thought euill of it themselves.

21. *In they kingdom.* This was praise worthy in Zebedeus sonnes, that they hoped for some kingdome of Christ, whereof there appeared not then so much as the least shew. They see him despised vnder the base estate of a seruauant, yet they see him despised and loathed of the world, and subiect to many reproofes: yet they perswaded themselves that shortly he shoulde bee a glorious king, because hee had so taught them. Sure a singular example of faith: but we perceiue hereby how quickly the pure seede degenerateth into corruptions, as soone as it is settled in our hearts: for they imagined the shadow of a kingdom, & presently they fall away and seeke for the chiefe rounes. Therefore, sith this wicked & vile

couetousnesse sprang after a generall beginning of faith, which of it selfe was worthy to be prayſed, we muſt pray vnto God that he would not only open the eyes of our minds, but alſo that he would continually direct vs, and hold vs in the right way. He muſt alſo be intreated, that he would not onely giue vs faith, but that he would keepe vs pure from all mixture.

22. *You know not what you aſke.* This their folly is to be condemned into two poyntes: firſt, for that they ambitiouſly deſired more then was meete, then for that they imagined a vaine fantaſie in ſtead of the celeftiall kingdom of Chriſt. Concerning the firſt, whoſoeuer not ſatiſfied with Gods free adoption deſireth to be aloſt, goeth beyond his calling, and by thruſting himſelfe in, farther then is meete, becommeth vnthankfull vnto God. Nowe it were too ouerthwart: a courſe to meaſure the ſpirituall kingdom of Chriſt, by the vnderſtanding of our fleſh. And certainly, the more ſuch idle ſpeculations doe delight mans vnderſtanding, ſo much the more they muſt be auoided: as ſee the bookes of the ſophiſters, full of ſuch vaine deuifes.

Can you drinke of the cup. That he might reprove their ambition, and withdraw them from their corrupt deſire, he ſetteth before them the croſſe, and all the trouble which the children of God muſt paſſe through. As if hee ſhoulde haue ſayd: haue you ſo much leiſure from the preſent warfare, that you now appoint an order for the glory and pompes of the triumph? For if they had bene earnestly giuen to follow their calling, they had neuer giuen place to this wicked imagination. Wherefore Chriſt in this ſentence commandeth them which doe greedily ſnatch at the price before the time, to bee occupied in meditating the exerciſes of godlineſſe. And certainly, ambition is beſt ſuppreſſed with this bridle, becauſe that our eſtate is ſuch while we wander in this world, that it behooueth vs to ſhake off the vaine delightes: the enemy ſometime ſetteth vpon vs with ſecret ſleights, and thoſe very many, and ſometime he aſſaulteth vs with open force. Is not he worſe then a foole, who amongſt ſo many deathes doeth careleſſly delight him in a fantaſied triumph? The Lord commandeth his to be ſure of the victory, and to triumph in the miſt of death, becauſe that otherwiſe they ſhould not be encouraged to fight manfully: but it is one thing for a man in hope of a reward promiſed from God, to bend himſelfe to fight chearefully: and to apply himſelfe withall his force to this purpoſe: and it is another thing for men vnmindfull of the warres, forſaking the enemy and neglecting the dangers, to runne before vnto the triumph: which ſhoulde haue bene wayted for vnto the time appointed. Note alſo that this prepoſterous ſpeeke, doeth for the moſt part draw men from their calling. For euen as the moſte coward in battle doth moſt greedily deſire the pray: ſo in the kingdome of Chriſte none doe more deſire the ſupremacie, then they which doe moſt flee all trouble and labours. Therefore Chriſt doth rightly tie them to their ſtanding, that are puffeſd vp with vaine glory. But the ſumme is, that the crowne is prepared for none but them which ſtrive lawfully: and eſpecially, that no man ſhall liue and raigne with Chriſte, except hee bee a partaker of his ſufferings and death before.

By the worde Baptiſme, the manner of the Metaphore doeth plainly appeare: for wee knowe that the faithfull are inſtructed by Baptiſme,

to deny themselves to crucifie the olde man, and also to beare the crosse. It is to be doubted whether the Lord by the word *cup*, alluded to the misterie of the holy Supper: but because that then it was not yet in vse, I doe rather take it for the measure of afflictions, which God assigneth to euery man. For because that the Lord according to his pleasure layeth his burden vpon euery man, euen as the housholder deuidenth and parteth his portions amongst his household, therefore it is sayd that he giueth them his cup to drinke. But there is no small comfort in these wordes to alay the bitternesse of the crosse, while that Christ doth ioyne himselfe with vs in the same. For what is more to be desired, then to haue all things in common with the sonne of God? For by that meanes it cometh to passe, that those things which at the first shew seeme to be deadly, doe worke for our saluation and life. And who soeuer desireth to bee altogether without the crosse, how shall he be accounted amongst the disciples of Christe, who refuseth to be baptised with his baptism? for this is nothing else then to withdraw himselfe from the first rudiments. And now as oft as baptism is mentioned, let vs remember that we are baptised of this condition, and to this end, that wee should beare the crosse vpon our shoulders. Iohn and Iames doe brag very lustily, that they are readie to drinke of the cuppe, in the which the bolde confidence of the flesh appeareth: for when wee are without the reach of the darts, wee seeme able to doe any thing. And that which befall shortly after, discountred their rashnesse. Yet this good was in them, that as menne ready for both estates, they offer themselves to beare the crosse.

23. *Ye shall drinke in deede of my cup.* Because they were his disciples, it was necessary that they should be made like their maister. And Christ telleth them before, what should come to passe afterwards, that they might arme themselves with patience: & vnder the person of these two men, he speaketh to his disciples. For though many of the faithfull haue that lot to die peaceably, & not a violent and bloody death, yet it is comon to al (as Paul Ro. 8 teacheth) to be made like to the image of Christ. Therefore they are all their life, as sheepe led to the slaughter.

It is not mine to giue. Christ by this answer derogateth nothing from himselfe: but only declareth that this office was not enioyned him of the father, to assigne euery man a distinct and proper teat in heauen. Hee came, that hee might gather all his into eternall life: and this ought to suffice vs, that there is an inheritance for vs purchased with his blood. But in what degree some shall bee placed aboue others, neyther is it our parte to enquire, neither would God that Christ should reueale it to vs, but that it should bee deferred vnto the last reuelation. Now wee vnderstand the purpose of Christ, that he disputeth not heere of his owne power, but onely woulde haue the ende considered wherefore hee was sent of the father, and what belongeth to his calling. And therefore he maketh a difference betweene the secreete counsell of God, and the office of teaching committed vnto him. A profitable admonition, teaching vs to be soberly wise, and not to endeuour our selves to breake into the hidden mysteries of God, and especially that wee bee not aboue measure, in searching the estate of the life to come. For it doeth not yet appeare, 1. Iohn 3. 2. what wee shall bee, vntill God shall make vs like vnto him. But it is to bee noted, that there is not an equalitie amongst the children of God, after

after they shall bee receiued into the heauenly glory, but hee rather promitteth that degree of honour to euery one of them, to the which they are ordained by the eternall counsell of God.

Matth. 20.	Marke 10.	Luke 22.
24. And when the other tenne heard this, they disdained at the two brethren.	41. And when the ten heard that they began to disdaine at Iames & Iohn. 42. But Iesus called the vnto him, & said to them: yee know that they which delight to beare rule among the Gentiles, haue domination ouer the, & they that bee great among them, exercise authority ouer the. 43. But it shall not be so among you: but who soeuer will be great among you, let him be your seruaunt.	24. And there arose also a strife among the, which of them should seeme to be the greatest.
25. Therefore Iesus called them vnto him, & saide: ye know that the Lordes of the Gentiles haue domination ouer them, and they that are great, exercise authority ouer them.	44. And who soeuer will be chiefe of you, shall bee the seruaunt of all.	25. But he sayde vnto them: The kings of the Gentiles raigne ouer them & they that beare rule ouer them, are called Gra- cious Lords.
26. But it shall not be so among you: but who soeuer will be great among you, let him be your seruaunt.	45. For euen the Sonne of man came not to be serued, but to serue, and to giue his life for the ransome of many.	26. But you shall not be so: but let the greatest among you, be as the least: & the chiefeest, as he that serueth.
27. And who soeuer will be chiefe among you, let him be your seruaunt.		27. For who is greater, hee that sitteth at table, or he that serueth? Is not hee that sitteth at table? And I am among you, as hee that serueth.
28. Euen as the Sonne of man came not to be serued, but to serue, and to giue his life for the ransome of many.		

24. When the other ten heard this. Luke seemeth to referre this contention to another time. But who soeuer shall wisely consider that 22. chapter, shall easily perceiue, that those speeches spoken at diuer times, were wrytten vp together with out regard of order. Therefore that contention for superiority, where of Luke maketh mention, sprang from the fountaine, that the sonnes of Zebedeus, ambitiously sought for the chiefe places in the kingdom of Christ. And yet the other hadde no iust cause to disdaine them: for when as the two were sharply reproofed for their foolish ambition, so that they went away from Christ with shame, what hurt tooke the other ten, by that foolish desire of theirs, which they obtained not? For though there was iust cause giuen the of emulation, yet the repulse of the others shuld haue appeased the. But the Lord would by this occasiō. discover the disease that lay hid in the. for there was not one of the which would willingly giue place to the others, but euery man nourished secretly in himselfe the hope of the superiority. For it commeth to passe, that they enuy & contend amongst the selues: yea, that wicked desire raigneth in all men. If that this vice was grafted in base and obscure men, & brake out vpon light and almost no occasion: how much behooueth it vs to take heede, where there is woode for the hidden fire to burne, or matter to worke on. Therefore wee see that ambition waxeth hotte amongst the mighty and honourable, and sheweth the flame.

farre and wide, except the spirit of modesty doe quench from heauen, that pride that sticketh in the nature of man.

25. Ye know that the Lords of the Gentiles haue domination ouer them. First it is said that Christ called them vnto him, that he might reprove them apart. And we do gather hereof, that when they were ashamed of their desire, they did not openly complaine, but there began a secret whispering & grudging, and euery one of them did secretly preferre himselfe aboue others. Further, he doth not generally declare how deadly a plague ambition is, but simply teacheth that there is not a more foolish thing, then to strue about nothing. For he declareth that there shall be no such superioritie in his kingdom as they did strue for. They therefore are deceiued, which doe stretch this saying to all the godly in generall, when as Christ onely teacheth of that matter in hande, that the Apostles were very fond to make any question of degree, of power, or of honour in their estate and calling: for the office of teaching whereto they were appointed, had no likelihood with the Empires of the world. I graunt that this doctrine as well appertaineth to priuate men as to kings and magistrates: for no man deserueth to be accounted of the flocke of Christ, but he that hath so profited vnder the schoolemaster of humilitie, so that he will arrogate nothing to himselfe, but humbly applyeth himselfe to maintaine brotherly loue.

This is true, but the purpose of Christe was (as I sayde) to put a difference, between the spirituall regiment of his Church and earthly empires, least the Apostles shoulde apply themselves to courtly graces and fashions. For as euery one among the nobles is beloued of kings, so hee climeth vppe to wealth and office. But Christe sette Pastours ouer his Church, not to beare a Lordly rule over them, but to minister. So the error of the Anabaptistes which doe bannish kings and Magistrates from the Church of God, because Christe sayde they were not like his disciples, is ouerthrowne: for the comparison is not made heere betweene Christians and prophane menne, but betweene offices. Note also, that Christe regarded not so much the persons of the menne, as the estate of the Church. For it might come to passe that he which shoulde be the Lorde of a towne or of a Citie, might also for necessitie execute withall the office of teaching. But it was sufficient for Christe to declare what the office Apostolicall woulde beare, and what was against the same. Yet it is demanded why Christe who appoynted distinct orders in the Church, refuseth all degrees in this place. For hee seemeth so to ouerthrow all, or at the least to make them equall, that none shoulde be liue vppe aboue others. But the course of nature teacheth vs a farre other order. And Paul describing the gouernement of the Church, rehearseth diuers offices of the ministerie, that he preferreth the office of the Apostles before the office of the Pastours: and he commaunded Timothie & Titus without doubt by the commaundement of God, to be aboue others in authority I answer, if we search al things thoroughly, kings themselves doe not rule rightly and lawfully, except they serue: yet herein the office of the Apostleshippe differeth from the earthly gouernement, for that kings and magistrates are not hindered by their seruice, but that they may rule and be ouer their subiectes with royall glory and pompe. So
David,

Dauid, Ezechias, and such like, when as willingly they became the seruants of all men, yet were they adorned with the Scepter, Diademe, Throne, and other such Ensignes. But the gouernement of the Church admitteth no suche thing: for Christ gaue no more allowance to the pastours, then if they shoulde bee ministers, and that they should altogether abstaine from Lordly gouernement.

Heere is also to be noted, that this is spoken rather of the thing it selfe then of the affection. Christ separateth his Apostles from the degree of kinges, not because it was lawfull for them to lift vpp themselves aboue kinges, but because there is a great difference betweene the estate of kinges, and the office of the Apostleship. Therefore when as it behooueth them both to bee humble and lowly, the Apostles must alwayes looke what forme of gouernement the Lord hath appointed vnto his Church.

As concerning the wordes, where Mathew sayeth, the *Kinges exercise authoritie ouer them*, Luke sayth, *they are called gracious Lordes, or bountifull*, both meaning one thing. As if hee should haue sayd: Kings flow in wealth, and haue a boundance of riches, that they might bee bountifull and liberall. For though kings reioyce more in their power, and had rather to be feared, then to be loued yet they desire to bee prayesed, and to bee accounted bountifull. Whereof they haue in the Hebrew tongue the name bountifull, so called of giuing or bestowing: for the customes & tributes are payed them to no other end, but that they may haue sufficient for their necessary charges of their honour and glory.

26. *It shall not be so among you.* It is not to be doubted but that Christe reproveth the foolish imagination wherewith he saw the Apostles deceived. It is foolishly and fondly done of you, to imagine that you shall haue a kingdome, which I abhorre. Therefore, if you desire to serue me faithfully, you must think vpon another course, that euery one of you doe earnestly apply themselves to serue others. But hee speaketh vnproperly, commanding him that will be greatest, to become a seruant, for ambition will not suffer him to serue and submitte himselfe to the brethren. I grant that they which doe aspire to honour, doe vse a seruile flatterie, but their purpose is nothing lesse then to serue. But the meaning of Christ is plaine: for sith euery man is caried away with the loue of himselfe, he sayth that this affection must be otherwise altered. As if hee should haue sayd: Let this be your onely greatnesse, excellency and dignity, to submit your selues to the brethren: let this also be your superioritie to be the seruantes of all.

n. 28. *As the Sonne of man.* Christ confirmeth the former doctrine by his owne example, because he had willingly humbled himselfe, and taken vpon him the estate of a seruant, as Paule also teacheth, Phil. 2. 7. Further, that hee might more euidently declare howe farre he was from such ambitious pompe, he calleth them backe to his death: as if hee should haue sayde: Because I haue chosen you in honour next vnto my selfe, corrupt ambition prouoketh you to desire to raigne. I (after whose example you should frame your life) came not to lift vp my selfe, or to take vpon me any kingly dignitie: but doe rather take vpon mee the shame of the crosse, together with the base and contemptible estate of the flesh.

If any man obieſt that Chriſt was therefore exalted of the father, that euery knee ſhould bow before him, is eaſily answered, for that he now ſayth, is to be referred to the time of his humiliation. Therefore it is added by Luke, that he was ſo conuerſant amongſt them, as if he were their ſervant : not that hee was inferiour to them, either in ſhewe or in title, or in deede (for he would be acknowledged for their maſter and Lord) but becauſe he humbled himſelfe to ſo great lowlineſſe, ſo that he ſubmitted himſelfe to beare their infirmities. Furthermore, it is to be remembered, that he compareth here the greater with the leſſe, as he doth in Iohn 13. 14. If I which am your Maſter and your Lord, haue waſhed your feete, much more ought you to doe this one to another.

To giue his life for the ranſome of many. Chriſt doeth therefore make mention of death (as wee ſayd) that he might withdraw his diſciples from that pecuſſe fantaſie of an earthly kingdome. In the meane while, is the force and fruite of the ſame aptly and very well expreſſed, while he ſayth that his life ſhould be the price of our redemption. Whereof it followeth that our reconciliation with God is a free gift, the ranſome whereof is no where elſe to be found, but in the death of Chriſt. Therefore in this one word, is ouerthrowne what ſoeuer the Papiſts doe prattle of their filthy ſatiſfactions. Furthermore, when as Chriſte ſhould ranſome vs to himſelfe by his death, ſo that this ſubmiſſion whereof hee ſpeaketh, is ſo farre from derogating from his great glory, ſo that it greatly adorneth the ſame. Hee ſpeaketh of *Many* not definitely for any certaine number, but for diuers. becauſe he oppoſeth himſelfe againſt all others. And in this ſenſe is it taken in the Epistle to the Rom. 5. 15. where Paul ſpeaketh not of any one ſort of men, but it comprehendeth all mankind.

Mat. 20.

Marke 10.

Luk 18

29. And as they departed from Iericho, a great multitude followed him.

30. And behold, two blinde men, ſitting by the way ſide, when they heard that Ieſus paſſed by, cried ſaying, O Lord the Son of David haue mercy on vs.

31. And the multitude rebuked them, becauſe they ſhould holde their peace : but they cryed the more ſaying, O Lorde, the ſonne of David, haue mercy on vs.

32. Then Ieſus ſtoode ſtill, and called them:

What

46. Then they came to Iericho: and as hee went out of Iericho with his Diſciples, and a great multitude, Bartimeus the ſonne of Timeus, a blinde man ſate by the way ſide begging.

47. And when he heard that it was Ieſus of Nazareth, he began to cry and to ſay: Ieſus the ſon of David haue mercy on mee.

48. And many rebuked him, becauſe he ſhould holde his peace: but he cried much more, O ſonne of David, haue mercie on me.

49. Then Ieſus ſtood ſtill, and commanded him to be called: & they called the blinde, ſaying to him: Be of good comfort: ariſe, he calleth thee.

50. So he threw away his cloke, and roſe and came to Ieſus.

51. And

35. And it came to paſſe, that as hee was come neare vnto Iericho, a certaine blinde man ſate by the way ſide begging.

36. And when hee heard the people paſſe by, he asked what it meant.

37. And they ſayd vnto him that Ieſus of Nazareth paſſed by. 38. Then he cryed, ſaying: Ieſus the ſonne of David haue mercy on me.

39. And they which went before, rebuked him & hee ſhould holde his peace, but he cryed much more. O ſonne of David, haue mercy on me.

40. And Ieſus ſtoode ſtill, and commanded him to be brought vnto him. And when he was come neare, he asked him:

41. Saying

What will yee that I should doe to you ?
 33. They sayde to him: Lord, that our eyes may be opened.
 34. And Iesus moved with compassion, touched their eyes, & immediately their eyes receiued sight, & they followed him

51. And Iesus answered and said vnto him: What wilt thou that I do vnto thee? And the blinde sayde vnto him: Lord, that I may receiue sight.
 52. Then Iesus said vnto him: Goe thy way, thy faith hath sau'd thee. And by and by, hee receiued his sight, and followed Iesus in the way.

41. Saying, what wilt thou that I doe vnto thee? And he said, Lord, that I may receiue my sight.
 42. And Iesus sayd vnto him: receiue thy sight, thy faith hath sau'd thee.
 43. Then immediately hee receiued his sight, and followed him praysing God: and all the people, when they sawe this, gaue prayse to God.

29. And as they departed thence. Oslander seemeth very subtilly, to make of one blinde man foure. But his deuise is very friuolous. Because he sawe the Euangelistes differ in many wordes, he imagined that hee gaue one blinde man his sight at his entrance into the city: but the second and two others had their sight giuen them, when Christ departed thence. But all the circumstances doe so agree, that no wise man will belecue that they entreate of diuerse hystories. For (that I may omit the rest) when they that followed Christe, endeouored first to make him hold his peace, and sawe him healed beyond their expectation would they so soone haue attempted the like in the other three ? But it is not needefull to follow euery point, out of the which euery man may gather easily, that they doe set down one and the same hystorie. But the difference offendeth them, for that Matthew and Marke doe say that the myracle was wrought vpon one or two blinde men, as Christ went out of the Citie: And Luke maketh mention that it was done before he came into the Citie. Then that Marke & Luke doe speake but of one blinde man, and Mathew addeth two. But sith we know that this doeth often fall out among the Euangelistes, that in setting downe one and the same hystorie, one letteth passe that which is reported of the others and againe, that is more plainly expounded by one which is passed in silence by the other: it must seeme no newe nor straunge thinge in this present place. And I doe suppose that the blinde man cryed out as Christe came toward the Citie: but sith hee was not heard then, because of the noyse, hee gate him into the way, at his coming out of the Citie, and then at length Christ called him.

So Luke beginning at the very beginning, doeth not prosecute the whole hystorie, but passeth ouer the time of Christes tariance in the citie: and the other two doe onely touch the time which was nearest to the myracle. And it may bee coniectured, that Christe oft times for the tryall of the faith of men, doth sometimes deferre them, and so hee tryed this blinde man. The seconde knotte is easily loosed: for wee haue seene in an other place before, that Marke and Luke reported, that one man possessed with a deuill was healed, where Mathew nameth two, euen as in this place, & yet they disagree not. But it may rather be coniectured, when one blind man at the first sought for help of Christ an other was moued by his example, and by this occasion two receiued their sight. But Marke and Luke doe speake of one onely, eyther because hee was

more knowne then the other, or beecaufe the power of Christe was as notably shewed in one as in two. And surely, Mark seemeth to speake of him that was so well knowne, and therefore setteth downe as well his owne name as his fathers. For he doth not commend either his birth or his wealth: for hee was of the meanest sort of the people, a begger. Whereby it appeareth that the myracle wrought vpon him, was the more notable, becaufe that his calamitie was commonly knowne. And this seemeth to mee to be the reason, why Marke & Luke doe onely name him, and say nothing of the other, who was as an inferiour addition. But Mathew who was as an eye witnesse, would not omit this other, though he was not so well knowne.

29. *O Lord the sonne of David, haue mercy on vs.* I sayd euen now, that one of these began to cry: but the like necessitie doeth easily driue the other to ioine himselfe also with him. Also, they giue no small honour to Christ, in this that they desire him to haue mercy vpon them, and to helpe them. For they were perswaded that he had helpe and remedie in his hand, which they needed: but their faith is more to be maruailed at in this, that they confesse him to bee the Messias, whom wee know the Iewes noted with this title. Therefore they flie to Christe, not onely as to some Prophet, but the onely authour of saluation, which was promised of God. The crying doth shew the vehemency of their affection: for when they knew that their wordes were odious to many, that regarded not the honour of Christ, their earnest desire ouercame their feare, so that notwithstanding they freely lifted vp their voyce.

31. *The multitude rebuked them.* It is maruaile that Christes disciples, which followed him for dutie and reuerence, would driue these poore wretches from the grace of Christe, and as much as in them lay, stopt the passage of his power. But this commeth oft times to passe, that the greatest number of the n, which professe the name of Christ, do rather hinder and stay vs from comming to him then call vs to him. If Sathan wrought by godly and simple men, which followed Christe for some religion, to bee a hinderance to these two blinde menne, howe much more will hee bring his purpose to passe by hypocrites and faithlesse menne, if wee take not diligent heede to our selues? Therefore wee haue neede of constancy, whereby wee may passe all stoppes and hinderances: yea, the moe stoppes Sathan layeth in our way, the more it behooueth vs to bende our selues earnestly to prayer: as wee seethese blinde men doubled their cry.

32. *What will yee that I shall doe?* He doth louingly and gently aske, what they desire. For he had determined to graunt their requests: for it is not to bee thought, but that they praied with a special motion of the spirit. For as the Lord will not deliuer all men from bodily diseases: so doth he not allow them simply to pray after their pleasure. There is a rule prescribed vs, what we should aske, and how, and in what respect: it is not lawfull to decline from the same, except the Lord by the secret motion of the spirit, teach any peculiar and speciall petition. But Christ asketh them this question, not so much in respect of their priuate cause, as in respect of all the people. For wee knowe that the worlde denoureth the blessings of God without sense, except it be moued & stirred vp.

There-

Therefore Christe by this sayinge, stirreth vpp the multitude there present to obserue and marke the myracle, as he doth also moue them with a visible signe, while he openeth their eyes with touching them. When Matthewe sayeth that Iesus hadde compassion of them, it is not the participle of that verbe, which he vied euen now in the person of the blinde manne. They besought Christe of his mercy, that hee would helpe them miserable creatures: but the Euangelist now declareth, that Christ was not onely moued of his free goodnesse to heale them, but because he was moued to sorrow and griefe together with them for their cuill. For the Metaphore is borrowed of the bowelles, where in humanitie and mutuall compassion resteth, which stirreth vs vp to helpe our neighbours.

MARK E. 52. *Thy faith hath saved thee.* By the word faith, he doth not only name the hope of recouering of his sight, but a deeper perswasio that this blind man had, in this that he acknowledged Iesus to be the Messias promised of god. Neither is this to be thought to bee a confuse knowledge, for we haue seene before, that this confession was taken out of the lawe and the Prophets. For the blinde man did not rashly call Christ by the name of the sonne of Dauid, but receiued him for such a one, as he was taught by the promise of God, shuld come. But Christ ascribeth it to faith, that the blind man receiueh his sight: for though the power and grace of God doeth sometime extend euen to the vnbelecuers, yet no man vseth his benefites rightly & profitably, but hee which enioyeth the same by faith, nay, the vse of the giftes of God, is so farre from profiting the vnfaithfull, that it is rather hurtfull. Wherefore this saluation, whereof Christ maketh mention, is not restrained to the outward health, but also comprehendeth the curing and sauing of the soule. As if Christ should haue saide, that the blinde man had obtained by fayth, that by Gods mercy hee should haue his request graunted. If that the Lord in respect of fayth, bestoweth his grace vppon the blinde man, it followeth that he was iustified by fayth.

MATH. 34. *They followed him.* This was a signe of thankfulness, that the blinde menne applyed themselves to follow Christ. And though it is vncertaine, whether they did tary long in this office and calling: yet it was a token of a thankfull minde, to shew forth the grace of Christ in this iourney to manny. Luke addeth that the people gaue the glory to God: which maketh for the assured proofe of the myracle.

Matth.

Marke.

Luke 9.

1. Nowe, when Iesus entred and passed through Iericho,
2. Behoulde there was a manne named Zacheus, which was the chiefe receiuer of the Tribute, and hee was rich:
3. And hee sought to see Iesus, who he should be, and could not for the prease, because hee was of a low stature.

M m 2

4. Whom

4. Wherefore he came before and climed vp into a wilde figge tree, that hee might see him: for hee shoulde come that way.
5. And when Iesus came to the place, he looked vp, and saw him, and sayde vnto him, Zacheus, come downe at once: for to day I must abide at thine house.
6. Then he came downe hastily, & receiued him ioyfully.
7. And when all they saw it, they murmured, sayinge, that he was gone in to lodge with a sinfull man.
8. And Zacheus stood foorth, and saide vnto the Lord: Beholde, Lorde, the halfe of my goodes I giue to the poore: and if I haue taken from any man by forged cauillation, I restore him foure folde.
9. Then Iesus sayd to him: This day is saluation come to this house, for as much as he is also become the sonne of Abraham.
10. For the sonne of manne is come to seeke, and to saue that which was lost.

Hereby it appeareth that Luke was not very curious in obseruing the order & course of times. For after that he hath declared the myracle, he now rehearseth what befell in the time of Iericho. And he saith, when Christ offered him selfe to all men, walking by the wayes, there was one Zacheus, who was very desirous to see him. For this was a signe of his great desire, that he climed vp vpon a tree, when as rich men for the most parte are proude, and challenge a shew of grauity in themselves. It may bee that other also desired the same: but Luke especially maketh mention of this man, rather then of any of the other, partly in respect of the estate of him, partly in respecte of the wonderfull conuersion of the man so sodainly wrought. And though Zacheus had not as yet faith planted in him, yet this was a certaine preparation to the same. For he could not so earnestly desire to see Christe without a heauenly instinct: especially to that ende, as it presently appeareth. For it is certaine, that some of a vaine curiositie came to see Christe from places farre distant: but it appeareth by the successe, that Zacheus had the seede of godlinesse in his minde. So the Lord before he manifesteth himselfe vnto men, doth often inspire them with a blinde affectio, whereby they are caried to him, whome they haue not yet knowne nor seene. And though they haue no certaine apparante reason why they doe so, yet he deceiueth them not: but reuealeth himselfe in time vnto them.

5. *Zacheus, come downe at once, for this day I must.* An example of grace worthy to be remembered, in that the Lord preuenteth Zacheus, and taryeth not for his bidding, but of himselfe seeketh entertainement at his house. We know how odious & how detestable the name of a Publican was, & that doth Luke shortly after declare. Therefore it was great kindnes of the sonne of God to come to him, whose company the comon people abhorred, and that before hee was bidden. But it is no meruaile that hee doeth him this honour, whome hee had drawne

vnto him by the secrete motion of the spirite before : for it was a more excellent giste, to dwell in his heart, then to enter into his house. And by this speech hee declareth that men which doe sincerely desire to knowe him, shall neuer seeke him in vaine. For Zacheus obtaineth muche more then he hoped for. Further, the force and direction of the holy Ghoste doeth more plainly appeare in this, that Zacheus obeyed so readily, and came so speedily from the tree, and receiued Christ with ioy. For though he had not as yet a perfect faith, yet this readinesse to learne, and obedience, was a beginning of faith.

7. *When all they sawe it.* The inhabitants of the towne doe murmure, and so it may be that some of them that followed Christ, did, because that he went in to a man disdained and of an euill name, yet when no manne bad him. So, when as the world neglecteth the grace of God offered vnto it, it murmureth and grudgeth that it is bestowed vpon others. But let vs see how far their grudging is from equitie: they thinke it an absurd thing that Christ should make that account of that wicked manne. For *Sinner* is not taken heere in the common sense, as in diuers other places: but it signifieth a man of a filthy and notorious euill life. Let vs grant that Zacheus was such a man: yet it must first bee considered, for what purpose Christ chose to lodge at his house. For while they murmured without the doore, god mightely shewing the glory of his name within confuted their wicked cauill. For the conuersion of Zacheus, was a wonderfull worke of God: yet there was no iust cause why they should speake so infamously of Zacheus. Hee was a receiuer of custome: and of it selfe it was not wicked to gather customes. but the Iewes were odious and enuious against that sort of people, because they thought it not meet for them to be tributaries. But what maner of man soeuer Zacheus was Christ was yet to be prayfed, and not to be blamed for his kindnesse for helping this miserable manne: in that hee brought him from destruction to saluation. For that offence feared him not, but that he went forward to doe that which his father commanded. And it behooueth all the ministers of the Gospell to haue this courage, that they should make more account of the saluation of one soule, then of the murmuring words of all the wicked, and therefore, though they see their deedes and al their sayings subiect to scanders, yet they should not cease from their office.

8. *And Zacheus stoode forth.* Christs worke may bee iudged of by this comming forth: but men make such preposterous haste, that they leaue no place to God. Also Zacheus conuersion is described by the fruites and the outward signes, because it was probable that he increased his wealth, by the hindrance of many men, he is readie if hee hath defrauded any man, to restore foure sold: furthermore he bequeatheth halfe of his goods to the poore. Some man might in deede haue bestowed all his goodes vpon the poore, whose liberalitie yet might be nothing accounted of before God: but though heere be no mention made of the inward repentance, yet Luke meaneth that this godly purpose which hee commendeth in Zacheus, sprang from that liuely roote. So Paule speaking of repentance, exhorteth vs so to behaue our selues, that menne may thereby vnderstand that wee are become better. Let him that stole steale no more: but let him rather labour and worke with his hands, that hee may haue to helpe the poore and needie, Ephes. 4. 28. Therefore wee must begin at our

heart, but our repentance must be shewed by our workes. But let vs note that Zacheus would not offer to God a portion of those things which hee had gotten by spoyle, as many rich menne doe giue a part of their thestes to God, that they might haue the more libertie to spoyle afterwarde, and they may goe free for the wrongs they haue done before. But Zacheus doeth so sacrifice the one halfe of his goodes to God, that hee also recompenceth what iniuries so euer he hath done. So Zacheus is not onely ready to satisfie any thing he had gotten by fraud, but he imparteth his lawfull patrimonie with the poore: whereby he declareth that he is turned from a wolfe, not onely into a sheepe, but also into a shepherd. And now amending the faultes before committed, he renounceth those euill practises hereafter: as God requireth of his this first, that they should abstaine from all offence. But Zacheus doth not of necessitie binde others to follow his example, and to spoyle themselves of the one halfe of their goodes: but that rule onely must be kept, which the Lord prescribeth, that wee should yeelde our selues and all wee haue, to holy and lawfull vses.

9. *This day is saluation come to this house.* This testimonie which Christ giueth to Zacheus, declareth that he did not dissemble: neither yet doth he ascribe the cause of saluation to his good workes: but because that conuersion was a sure pledge of the adoption of God, hee doeth thereby gather very well, that that house should inherite saluation: and this doe the wordes also signifie. For because Zacheus was one of the children of Abraham, hee argueth that his house should be saued. Further, it is necessary that he which would bee accounted amongst the children of Abraham, should follow his faith: yea, the scripture giueth this commendation properly to faith, for that it putteth the difference betweene the naturall children of Abraham, and strangers. Therefore wee must knowe that that is principally commended, which is the cause wherefore his good workes doe also become acceptable to God. Neyther is it to be doubted but that Christes doctrine went before the conuersion of Zacheus. Therefore that was the beginning of saluation, the hearing of Christ teaching of the free mercy of God, of the reconciliation of men with him, of the redemption of the Church, and by faith to receiue that doctrine. Because that *House* is the masculine gender in Greeke, this place may be expounded two wayes. The olde interpreter referreth this to Zacheus: which iudgement I do also like best. Erasmus had rather translate it, that the house it selfe was the childe of Abraham: which though I doe not reuell, yet I doe thinke that it is most aptly applied to Zacheus. For while God adopteth the householder, hee also promisseth that hee will bee God of his whole house, by right the saluation reacheth from the head to the whole bodie. But this word *Also*, or *And*, is of importance: for Christe declareth that Zacheus is no lesse the childe of Abraham then the other Iewes, which in their pride despised him. And least his former life shoulde seeme to haue shut the gate of saluation against him, hee reasoneth of his office, and proueth that there is nothing in this change, that should offende any man: because hee was sent of the father to saue them which were lost.

Matth. 25.

Marke

Luke 19.

14. For the kingdom of heauen is as a man that going into a strange cōtry, called his seruants, & deliuered to the his goods. 15. And vnto one he gaue 5. talents, & to another two, and to another one, to euery man after his owne habilitie, & straight way went from home. 16. Then he that had receiued the 5. talents, went and occupied with them and gained other five talents.

17. Likewise also, hee that receiued two, he also gained other two. 18. But hee that receiued that one, went and digged it in the earth, & hid his masters money. 19. But after a long season, the maister of those seruants came and reckened with them. 20. Then came hee that had receiued five talēts, and brought other five talents, saying: Maister, thou deliueredst vnto mee 5. talents: beholde, I haue gained with them other five talents.

21. Then his Maister sayde vnto him: It is well done good seruauit & faithfull: thou hast beene faithfull in little, I wil make thee ruler ouer much enter into thy maisters ioy.

22. Also hee that had receiued two talents, came and saide maister, thou deliueredst vnto mee two talents: beholde I haue gained two other talents with them. 23. His maister said vnto him: It is well done, good seruauit and faithfull. Thou hast beene faithfull in little, I will make thee ruler ouer much, enter into thy maisters ioy.

24. Then he which had receiued the one talent, came and saide: maister, I knew thou wast an hard man, which reapest where thou sowedst not, and gatherest where thou strawedst not:

25. I was therefore afraid, and went and hidde thy tallent in the earth: behold, thou hast thine owne.

26. And his maister answered and sayde

11. And whiles they heard these things, he continued & spake a parable, because he was neare to Ierusalem, & because also they thought that the kingdō of God should shortly appeare. 12. He said therefore, a certaine noble man went into a far cōtry, to receiue for him a kingdō & so to come againe: 13. And he called his ten seruants, and deliuered ten pieces of mony, and sayde vnto them, occupy till I come. 14. Now his citizens hated him, & sent an embassage after him: saying, we wil not haue this mā to raigne ouer vs. 15. And it came to passe when he was come againe, and had receiued his kingdō, that he commanded the seruants to be called to him, to who hee gaue his mony, that hee might know what euery man had gained.

16. The first came, saying: Lord, thy piece hath encreased ten pieces.

17. And he said vnto him: wel, good seruant: because thou hast bin faithfull in a very little thing, take thou authority ouer x. cities. 18. And the second came, saying: Lord, thy piece hath encreased 5. pieces. 19. And to the same he sayd: Be thou ruler ouer 5. cities. 20. So the other came & said: lord, behold thy piece which I haue laid vp in a napkin. 21. For I feared thee, because thou art a strait man thou takest vpp that thou laidest not downe, and reapest that thou diddest not sow. 22. The he said vnto him, of thy own mouth will I iudge thee, O euill seruant: Thou knowest that I am a strait manne, taking vpp that I laid not downe, & reaping & I did not sow.

23. Wherefore then gauest thou my mony into the banke, that as my coming I might haue receiued it with vantage? 24. And

M m 4.

said vnto him: thou euill seruant and fouthfull, thou knewest that I reape where I sowed not, and gather where I sowed not. 27. Thou oughtest therefore to haue put my money to the exchangers, and then at my comminge, should I haue receiued mine owne with vantage. 28. Take therefore the talent from him, and giue it vnto him which hath ten talents. 29. For vnto euery man that hath, it shalbe giuen, and he shall haue abundance, and from him that hath not, euen that he hath shalbe taken away.

30. Cast therefore that vnpromisable seruante into utter darkenesse: there shalbe weeping & gnashing of teeth.

24. And he said vnto them that stood by, take from him that piece, & giue it him that hath ten pieces

25. (And they sayde vnto him, Lord, he hath ten pieces:)

26. For I say vnto you, that vnto all them that haue, it shall be giuen: and from him that hath not, euen that hee hath, shall be taken from him.

27. Moreover, those mine enemies, which would not that I should raigne ouer them, bring hither, & slay them before me.

28. And when he had thus spoken, he went forth before, ascending vp to Ierusalem.

L V. 11. And whiles they heard these things. This was a wonderfull thing, that the disciples being so oft admonished of the death of Christ, doe passe ouer to a kingdome. And this was a double error: first that they dreamed of a blessed rest without affliction, then that they valued the kingdome of God after their owne fleshly vnderstanding. Whereby it appeareth how small and darke their faith was: for though they had tasted of the hope of the resurrection, yet that taste was so little, that they had not any thing certainly and firmly of Christe as they should. They beleue that he is the redemer, which was promised in times past, by whome they hope the Church shall be renewed: but that knowledge doeth presently vanish into fantasies, which doe either peruert or darken the force of his kingdome. But nothing is more absurd, then that so many admonitions giuen them, shoulde be forgotten without profite. This truly was a heattly blockishnes in them, not onely to remaine secure and carelesse, but to hast as it were to the triumph, when as Christ had so lately and expressely tolde them, that his bitter and shamefull death was at hand.

12. A certaine nobleman. Matthe we not regarding the order of the times, placeth this parable amongst others. But because his purpose was from the beginning of the 22. chap. to gather together the last speeches of Christ: there is no cause why the readers shuld much seeke what was spoken the first, the second or the third day, within so short a time. Now it is worth the labour to note, what Marth. and Luke doe differ amongst themselves: for when he toucheth onely one part, this latter toucheth two. This they doe both sette downe, that Christe is like to a noble manne, who going into a farre country to get a kingdome, deliuered his money to his seruants to occupy, and so forwards. But that other part is only touched by Luke, that his subiects abused the absence of the prince, moued a tumult, that they might shake off his yoake from them. Christ in both points bent to this, that the disciples were far deceiued, in that they thoght that they shoulde now haue a kingdome established, and that they went nowe

to Hierusalem, presently to erect a glorious estate of the same. So the hope of a present kingdom being taken away, he exhorteth them to hope and patience. For he telleth them that they must abide many troubles a long time, & carefully, before they shall enjoy that glory, which they so earnestly gape after.

Into a farre country. Whereas the Disciples thought that Christe went euen then to take possession of his kingdom, he reprooueth this errour first: because hee must take a long journey to get him his kingdom. Further, they which hunt after curious poyntes, doe subtilly dispute what that farre country should meane. I suppose that Christ ment no other thing, then his long absence from the time of his death, vntill his last comming. For though he sitting at the right hand of his father, hath obtained the rule ouer heauen and earth, and since he ascended into heauen all power is giuen, that euery knee shoulde bow before him: yet, because hee hath not thoroughly brought all his enemies vnder, nor yet appeared as iudge of the worlde, nor manifested his glory, it is not vnaptly sayde that hee is absent from his, vntill hee returne againe furnished with a new kingdom. It is true that hee raigneth now, in that he regenerateth his into a heauenly life, and reneweth them after the image of God, and accompanieth them with Angelles, while hee governeth his Church by his word, preferueth it by his might, enricheth it with the giftes of the spirit, cherisheth it with his grace, and sustaineth it by his power, and to bee short, hee bestoweth vpon it what soeuer is necessary for the saluation of the same, while hee slayeth the rage of Sathan, and of al the wicked, & bringeth all their deuises to nothing: but because this manner of gouernement is hid from the eyes of the body, the manifestation of the same is properly deferred vnto the latter day. Therefore when as the Apostles did fondly take holde of the shadow of a kingdom, the Lord sayth that he must seeke the kingdom a farre off, that they might learne to abide that delay.

13. *He calleth his ten seruants.* The number of the seruants, is not so much to be rested vpon, as the summes of money. For Mat. speaking of diuers summes, containeth the more plentiful doctrine: for that christ doth not lay the like burden of trauell vpon all men, but committing a small sum to one, hee maketh an other ruler ouer more. They both agree in this, that Christe after a sort goeth a journey into a far country from his, vntill the last day of the resurrection: but in the meane while it is not meete that they should sit idle & do nothing: for euery perticular man hath a certaine calling laid vpon him, wherein he should exercise himselfe: therefore they ought to apply their busines, that they might diligently further the Lords worke. Luke saith simply, that euery mā hath a peece of mony giuen him, because that whether the Lord commiteth vnto vs more or less, euery man shall giue a like account for himselfe. Matthew (as I sayde) dealeth more fully and plainly, for he speaketh of distinct & seuerall portions. For wee know that the Lord doth not giue to al men without differēce, the like measure of gifts. but diuideth the diuersly as he thinketh best, that some shuld excel others, 1. Cor. 12. 7. & Eph. 4. 7. Also we must know, that what gift soeuer the Lord bestoweth vpon vs, is committed vnto vs as money, that some gaine should arise thereof. For there is not a viler thing, then that the graces of God (the force whereof consisteth in the fruit of them) should lie buried, & not be applied to some vse.

MAT. 15. *To every man after his owne ability.* Christ doth not in these words distinguish nature from the gifts of the spirit. For there is no power nor ability, which is not to be acknowledged to be receiued from God. Therefore whosoever would part with God, that leaue nothing for himselfe. The what is the meaning of this, that the maister gaue to every man more or lesse after his owne ability? That is, because God, as he hath disposed every man, & adorned him with naturall gifts, so also doth he lay this or that vpon him, exerceiseth them in doing of things, he carieth them forwardes to diuers callings; he furnisheth them notably, for the worke, & giueth occasion for them to be occupied in. But the Papists are to be laughed at, while they do here of gather that the gifts of god are bestowed vpon every man, according to the measure of his deseruing. For though the old interpreter vsed this word *virtue*, yet he meant not that God would bestow vpon men, according as they should behaue themselves, and get the prayse of vertue: but only as the maister should esteeme them fit. And we know that God findeth no man fit, vntill he hath made him so. And there is no ambiguitie in the Greek word *Dunamis*, which Christ vseth.

20. *He which had five talents.* They are said to gaine, which do profitably employ what soeuer God hath left with them. For the life of the godly is aptly compared to gayning by occupying, for they ought to deale to and fro for the maintenance of societie amongst themselves. And the industry which every man applyeth in the occupying of the gift committed to him, & the calling it selfe, the faculty of well doing, and the other gifts, are accounted for marchandise: because they belong to this vse and end, that there may be a mutuall fellowship amongst men. And the gaine wherof Christ maketh mention, is the common profit, which setteth forth the glory of God. For though God doth not enrich nor encrease our works, yet as every man doth profit most his brethren, & doth profitably apply for their saluation the gifts, which hee hath receiued of God: so is he said to profit or to gaine to God himselfe. For the heavenly father doth so much account of the saluation of men, that whatsoeuer is employed that way, he would haue it reckoned amongst his accounts.

Further, least wee shoulde waxe weary of well doing, Christe sayeth that their labour shall not bee in vaine, which doe exercise themselves faithfully in their calling. Luke sayeth that hee was made ruler ouer five citties, which hadde gayned five pieces: by which wordes he declareth that the glory of his kingdome shall be farre otherwise at his last comming, then it now appeareth. For now we labour and trauell as it were about the businesse of one absent, but then he shall haue great aboundance and store of honours in his hand, wherewith he will royally sette vs vpp. The manner of speech set downe by Matthew is more simple and playne, *Enter into thy maisters ioy*: where by hee declareth that faithful seruantes, whose labours hee shall allow shall bee made partners with him of the blessed aboundance of all good things: but it is demanded what hee meaneth by this, which is added, *Take the talent from him, & giue it to him that hath ten*: for then all manner of occupying shall cease. I answer, that must be remembered, which I spake of before: they doe amisse, which do curiously search every perticular poynte. But the naturall meaping is, that though slouthfull and vnprofitable seruantes are now furnished with gifts of the spirit

spirit, at length they shall be spoyled of all, that their wante and shamefull p^ouertie may turne to the glory of the good. Christe sayeth, that these slouthfull seruantes doe hide either their talent or peice in the earth, because they wil take no paines, while they prouide for their owne pleasures and ease: as we see many while they giue themselves to themselves and to their owne commodities, they doe flye all duties of charitie, and haue no respect of the common profite. Where it is sayd that the maister after his returne called his seruantes to an account, as the good may hereby receiue comfort, because they knowe that their labour is not in vaine: so againe it striketh no small terrour to the slacke and slouthfull. Therefore let vs learne before the Lorde commeth and reckoneth with vs, to reckon with our selues euery day of our owne accord.

24. *I knew that thou wast an hard man.* This hardnesse appertaineth nothing to the summe of this parable: and they doe gather a fond fancie, which do here dispute, how austerely and straightly God dealeth with his. For it was as farre from Christes purpose heere to note any such rigour, as to prayse vsuries, when as hee bringeth in the maister, speaking thus: Thou oughtest to haue put my money to the exchang^{ers}, for the least it might haue increased by vsury. Christ onely declareth that no excuse shall serue for their slouth, which both suppress the giftes of God, and consume their age in idlenes. Whereby wee doe also gather that no kind of life is more commendable before God, then that whereof some profite doth arise to the societie of men. This sentence, *To euery one that hath, shall be giuen*, is expounded before in the thirteene chapter.

Also in the eight Chapter before, we haue taught, that the viter darkenes is opposed to the home light. For when as in olde the suppers were kept in the night, and had many torches and lampes to light them, Christ sayth, that they which are cast out of the kingdome of God are cast out into darkenes.

L. V. K. E. 27. *Moreover, those mine enemies.* In this second parte hee seemeth specially to reprove the Iewes, yet hee toucheth all, which in the absence of the maister doe bend themselves to fall away. And Christe purposed not onely to terrifie such with denouncing of horrible vengeance: but also to keepe his in faithfull obedience. For it is no light temptation to see the kingdome of God shaken with the faithlesnesse and rebellion of many. Therefore that wee might remaine quiet amongst so many tumultuous stirres, Christ sayeth, that hee will come againe, and will bee reuenged at his comming of that vngodly falling away.

Matthew 21

Marke 11.

Luke 16.

1. And when they drew neere to Ierusalem, and were come to Bethphage, vnto the mount of the Oliues, then sent Iesus two disciples.

2. Saying to them, go into the townne

1. And when they came neere to Ierusalem, to Bethphage, & Bethania vnto the mounte of Oliues, he sent forth two of his disciples.

2. And sayd vnto them, goe your

29. And it came to passe when he was come neere to Bethphage, and Bethania, besides the mount which is called v^{nto} mount of Olyues, he sent 2. of his disciples.

30. Saying,

towne that is ouer against you, and anon ye shall find an Asse bound, and a Colte with her: loose them, and bring them vnto me:

3. And if any man saye ought vnto you, say ye that the Lord hath need of the; & straight way he will let them goe.

4. All this was don; that it might be fulfilled which was spokē by the prophet saying

5. Tell yee the daughter of Sion, behold thy king cometh vnto thee meeke, and sitting vpon an Asse, and a Colte, the foale of an Asse yfed to the yoke.

6. So the disciples went, & did as Iesus had commanded them:

7. And brought the Asse and the Colte, and put on them their clothes, and set him thereon.

8. And a great multitude spreade their garments in the way, and other cutte downe branches from the trees, and strawed them in the way.

9. Moreover, the people that went before, and they that followed, cryed, saying, Hosanna the sonne of Dauid: blessed be hee that cometh, in the name of the Lord, Hosanna, thou which art in the highest heauen.

your wayes into that towne that is ouer against you, and assoone as yee shall enter into it, yee shall finde a Colte bounde, whereon neuer man sate: loose him, and bring him.

3. And if any manne say vnto you, why doe yee this? say that the Lord hath neede of him, and straightway he will send him hither.

4. And they went their way, and found a Colte tied by the dore without, in a place where two wayes met, and they loosed him.

5. Then certaine of them that stood there, sayd vnto them what doe yee loosing the Colte?

6. And they sayd vnto them, as Iesus had commanded them. So they let them goe.

7. And they brought the Colte to Iesus, and cast their garments on him, and hee sate vpon him.

8. And many spread their garments on the way: other cutte downe branches of the trees, and strawed them in the wayes.

9. And they that went before, and they that followed, cryed, saying, Hosanna, blessed bee hee that cometh in the name of the Lord.

10. Blessed bee the kingdome that cometh in the name of the Lord of our father Dauid: Hosanna, O thou which art in the highest heauens.

30. Saying, goe to the town, which is before you wherein assoone as ye are come, yee shall find a Colte tyed, whereon neuer man sate: loose him, and bring him hither.

31. And if any man aske you why yee loose him, thus shall ye say vnto him because the Lorde hath neede of him.

32. So they & were sent, went their way, & found it: as hee had saide vnto them. 33. And as they were loosing the Colte, the owners thereof sayd vnto them, why loose ye the Colte?

34. And they sayd, the Lord hath neede of him.

35. So they brought him to Iesus, and they cast their garments on the Colte, & set Iesus thereon.

36. And as he went, they spred their clothes in the way. 37. And when hee was now come neere to & going downe of the mounte of Oliues, the whole multitude of the disciples began to reioyce, & to prayse god with a loud voice, for al the great works & they had seene. 38. Saying blessed bee the king & cometh in the name of the Lord: peace in heauen & glory in the highest places.

Christ sent for the Asse by his Disciples, not because he was weary of the iourney, but to an other ende. For sith the time of his death was now at hande, his minde was to shew, what should bee the nature of his kingdome.

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He beganne to do so at his baptisme: but this remained to be shewed towards the end of his calling. For why should hee thus long abstaine from being called king, and now at the length of himselfe professeth himselfe to be a king, but because hee is not farre from the ende of his race? Therefore the time being neere of his departure into heauen, he openly began his kingdome vpon earth. But this pompe had been very ridiculous, if it had not answered to the prophesie of Zachary. Christe challenging a kingly honour to himselfe, entreth into Ierusalem, riding vpon an Asse, a royall shew I warrant you. Note also that he had borrowed the Asse of another. Nowe in that he wanted a saddle & other furniture, so as his disciples were compelled to lay their clothes vpon it, was a token of vile and shamefull pouerty. He had, I graunt, a great company following him, but of what manner of men, but such as vnadvisedly had runne to him out of the next villages? There are many ioyfull shoutes heard, but of whom? namely, of poore men, and of the basest sort of the people: as if he had of purpose set himselfe to be scorned of all men. But because he was to doe two things together, as to giue some shewe of his kingdome, and to teach that it is not like to earthly empires, nor standeth in the transitory riches of this worlde, it was meete that he should hold this very course. Yet this also might seeme a sonde thing to prophane men, if God had not declared before by his Prophet, that there shoulde come such a king to restore the sauing health of his people. Therefore least the contemptible estate of Christe shoulde hinder vs from beholding his spirituall kingdome in this shewe, let vs alwayes haue that heauenly Oracle before our eyes, wherewith God more adorned his sonne vnder that contemptible shew of a begger, then if he shuld haue shone with all the ensignes of all the kinges of the earth. Without this sauce this history will neuer bee sauioury to vs: therefore Mathewes wordes are of great weight, when he sayeth, that the saying of the Prophet was fulfilled. For when he saw that menne which are too much giuen to glorious and pompous shewes, can hardly be brought by their owne wisdome of the flesh to profit any thing by this history, hee leadeth them from the simple beholding of the thing to the consideration of the prophesie.

2. *Goe into the towne.* He borrowed not the Asse to ease him in his journey: for being come as farre as Bethanie, hee might easily haue gone the rest of the journey on foote. But as kinges goe vppon their Charets that they may bee seene a farre offe: so the Lorde would by this meane moue the people to looke vppon him, and by some token to ratifie the cries of his followers, least any man shoulde thinke that they gaue him the honour of a king against his will. It is vncertaine from whence the Lorde commaunded them to bringe the Asse, but that it is supposed from some countrey village. For it is very ridiculous that some doe allegorically expound it of Ierusalem. As vnapt also is that allegory which they doe coyne of the Asse and the Colte, they would haue the Asse to bee a figure of the Iewish people, which had bene before brought vnder and accustomed to the yoke of the lawe: and that the Colt whereon neuer manne had rydden represented the Gentiles. And that Christe did therefore firste ride vpon the Asse, because hee was first to begin with the Iewes: and that then he shifted ouer to the Colt, because that he was
also.

also in the second place set ouer the Gentiles. And Math. seemeth to note his riding vpon them both. But considering this figure Synecdoche is so often vled in the scripture, it is no meruaile if he name two for one. But it plainly appeareth by the other Euangelistes, that hee ridde onely vpon the Colt. And Zachary taketh away this doubt: for because of the familiar vse of the Hebrew tongue, he reherleth one thing twise. *And anon yee shall finde.* Least he should hinder the disciples from yeelding a ready obedience, the Lord speedily answereth to these questions. And first hee telleth them that he sendeth them not at aduenture, when hee sayth, that at the first entraunce of the towne they shoulde finde a young Assie with his damme, then that no man should hinder them, but that they should bring him, so that they answered that he had neede of it. And by this meanes he proued his Godhead For it belongeth to God alone to know that, which is absent, and to bend the heartes of menne to yeeld consente. For though it might haue beene, that the owner of the Assie hauing no euill opinion of him, would willingly graunt it: yet to say whether hee should bee at home or no, or whether he would then lend it him, or whether he would giue credit to those men vnknowne to him, it was not in mortall men to say. And as Christe strengtheneth his disciples, that they might be the readier to obey: so wee see how dilligent and ready they shew themselues in obeying. And the successe declareth, that this whole matter was gouerned of God.

5. *Tell yee the daughters of Sion.* This is not in Zachary word for word: yet the Euangelist doth aptly and fitly apply that to all godly teachers, which God gaue in com-maundement to one Prophet to declare. For this was the onely hope, whereupon the children of God shoulde stay and strengthen themselues, that the Redeemer should come at the length. And therefore the Prophet teacheth that the comming of Christ should bring full and perfect matter of reioycing to the faithfull. For because God is not otherwise mercifull to them, but by putting a Mediatour betweene them, and the same Mediatour is he which deliuered his from all euils, what can there be with out him, that can comfort men lost by their owne sinnes, & oppressed with miseries. And as Christ being absent, it is of necessity that we should be altogether ouerwhelmed with sorow: so againe the Prophet telleth the faithfull, that they haue iust cause to reioyce, when the Redeemer is present with thē. And though he comendeth Christ with other titles, as that he is iust and furnished with saluation: yet Matthewe tooke but that one poynt, which serued for his purpose, namely, that he shuld come poor or meeke, that is vnlike to earthly kings, which excell in royall and pompous estate. And this is added as a token of his pouerty, that he should ride vpon an Assie, or the Colt of an Assie. For it is not to be doubted, but that hee opposeth this meane manner of riding, against a princely pompe.

6. *The disciples went.* It is already spoken before, that the disciples are here commended for their diligence and readines to obey. For the authority of Christe was not so great that his bare name shoulde suffice to moue straungers. Also it was to be feared, least they shuld be charged with theft. Therefore it doth hereby appeare, how much they credited the maister, in that they answere not againe, but trusting to his promise, they hastied to execute that which they were commaunded.

Let vs also learne by their example, to goe through all lets and hinderances, that we may obey the Lord in those thinges, which he requireth of vs. For all lets set aside, he shall finde passage, and he will not suffer our endeauour to be in vaine,

8. *And a great multitude.* The Euangelistes doe heere declare, that the people acknowledged Christ as a king. But it might seeme to bee but a iest, that the simple people by cutting downe of boughes, and spreading of garmentes in the way, should giue to Christ the vaine title of a king. Yet as they did this in earnest, and testified their obedience from their heart: so Christ accounted the as fit herauldes or proclaymers of his kingdome. Neyther is ther any cause why wee should maruaile at such a beginning, when as at this day also he now sitting at the right hande of his father, euen from his heauenly throne calleth obscure men, by whom his maieltie is set forth in base maner. That they cut down the boughes of Palmes (as many interpreters doe gesse) according to an auancient and solemne custome of that day, I see no probabilitie nor likelihood. But it rather appeareth that they were moued with a sodaine instinct of the spirite, to giue this honour to Christ, when as the disciples, which were examples of this matter to the rest of the multitude, had thought of no such thing: and this also may be gathered out of Lukes wordes.

9. *Osanna the sonne of David.* This prayer is taken out of the Psalme, 118. 25 Mathew also doth purposely set downe the Hebrew wordes, that wee might knowe that these greetings were not rashly giuen to Christ, nor that the Disciples spake at randon without regarde, what wordes soeuer came vppon their tongues end: but they reuerently followed that forme of prayer, which the holy Ghost by the mouth of the Prophet had taught the whole Church. For though he speaketh there of his kingdome, yet no doubt, but that he had speciall regard and would haue others to haue regard to that eternal succesion, which y^e Lord had promised him. For he had prescribed vnto the Church a perpetuall order for prayer, which was also vsed, when the wealth of the kingdome was decayed. So it came to passe by custome, that they euery where vsed these wordes in theyr prayers for the redemption promysed.

And Mathewes purpose was (as wee touched euen now) to set down in Hebrew a verse notably and commonly vsed, to declare that the people acknowledged Christe to bee the Redeemer. The pronounciation of the words is somewhat altered: for it should rather haue bene sayd, *Hoschia: na saue*, I beseech but we know that the words can scarcely be translated into an other tongue, but that somewhat of the sounde must bee chaunged. And the spirit did not onely teach the old people to pray for the kingdome of Christ, but also prescribeth the same rule vnto vs now. And when as God will not raigne but by the hande of his sonne, the same is noted in these words, when wee saye, Thy kingdome come, as it is more plainely declared in the Psalme. Furthermore, this praying to God, that hee would preserue his Sonne our king, wee graunt that this kingdome is not erected by manne, nor vpholden by the power of menne: but standeth inuincible by his defence from heauen.

He is sayd to come in the name of God, which doth not intrude him selfe, but taketh the kingdome at the commaundement and appointment of God
which

which is more certainly gathered out of Marke, where there is another crie set downe, blessed be the kingdome that commeth in the name of the Lord of our father Dauid. For so they say in respect of the promises: because the Lord had sayd that he would at the length deliuer that people, and had appointed the meane of the restoring of the kingdome of Dauid. Then we see that the honour of the Mediatour, from whom the restitution and saluation of all things was to be hoped for, is attributed to Christ. But when as they were common, rude & simple people, which called the kingdome of Christ, the kingdome of Dauid, hereby we learne that this doctrine was commonly knowne, which at this day seemeth to be so strang & hard, because they are but litle exercised in the scriptures.

In Luke are these few wordes added, *Peace in heauen, and glory in the highest places.* Wherin there is no difficulty, but that they answer not to the song of the Angels, which we had in the second chapter. For there the Angels assigne the glory to God in the heauens, and peace to men vpon the earth: heere the peace as well as the glory is referred to God. Yet in the sense there is no diuersitie. For though the Angels do shew the cause more plainly, why it was meete that glory should be song to God: (namely, because that by his mercy men enioy peace in this worlde) yet the meaning is all one, of that, and this that the multitude now sayth, that peace is in heauen: for we know that miserable soules can other wise haue no peace in the world, except God reconcile himselfe vnto them frō heauen.

Math.

Marke.

Luke 19

41. And when he was come neere, hee beheld the citie, and wept for it.

42. Saying, O, if thou hadst euen knowne at the least in this day those thinges, which belong vnto thy peace, but now are they hid from thine eyes.

43. For the dayes shall come vpon thee, that thine enemies shall cast a trench about thee, and compass thee round, and keepe thee in on euery side.

44. And shall make thee euen with the ground, and thy children whiche are in thee: and they shall not leaue in thee a stone vpon a stone, because thou knowest not the time of thy visitation.

41. He wept vpon it. When as Christ desired nothing more, then to discharge that office layd vpon him by his father, and hee knew that this was the ende of his calling, to gather together the lost sheepe of the house of Israell: he desired that his comming might be to the sauing health of all men. This was the cause why he being moued with mercy, wept for the destruction of the city of Ierusalem which was at hand. For when he considered that it was chosen of God to bee the sacred seate, wherein the couenant of eternal saluation should rest, & the sanctuary frō whence saluation shuld proceed into the whole world: it could not bee but that he should greatly bewaile the destruction of it. Also, when he should see the

the people which he had adopted into the hope of eternall life, miserably to perish through their owne vnthankfulnes and malice: it is no maruaile if he could not refrain from teares. Some thinke it an absurditie that Christe shoulde bewaile that mischeife, which hee coulde haue remedied, but this knot is easily dissolued. For as hee descended from heauen, that by taking vpon him the flesh of man, he might be a witnesse and minister of the saluation of God: so tooke hee vpon him indeede humane affections, so farre soorth as was meete for the calling he had taken vpon him. And that must alwayes be wisely noted, what person hee taketh vpon him when he speaketh, or laboureth for the saluation of men, as in this place, that he might faithfully fulfill the commandement of the father, it was necessary for him to seeke that the fruite of redemption might extend to the whole body of the elect people. Therefore for so much as hee was appointed a minister of saluation to this people, he bewayled their destruction in respect of his office. Hee was God, I grant: but as oft as hee supplied the office of a teacher, his Godhead rested, and after a sort hid it selfe, least it should be any hinderace to him in doing the office of a Mediatour. But by this weeping he declared, that he did not onely loue them brotherly, for whose sake hee was made man, but that God had also powred into his humane nature the spirit of a fatherly affection.

42. *O, if thou hadst knowne.* This speech is patheticall or affectionate, & therefore abrupt. For wee knowe that they which are moued with vehement affections, can vtter but halfe their meanings. Note also that two affections are mixed heere together. For Christ doth not only take pitie of the destruction of the citie, but he also reprobeth this vnthankfull people of a haynous offence, in that they refusing saluation offered them, yuld willingly vpon them the horrible iudgement of God. And the copulatiue which is put between is very forceable. For Christ doth secretly compare Ierusalem with the other cities of Iudea & of the whole world, in this sense: If thou also, which hast a speciall priuiledge aboue the rest of the world, if thou (I say) at least, which art a celestiall sanctuary vpon the earth hadst known. Presently there followeth after an other amplification gathered of the time. Though hetherto thou hast wickedly, vngodly and stubbornly behaued thy selfe against God, now at the length, it were time for thee to repent. For he sheweth that the day is now come, which was ordained before in the secret counsell of God, and spoken of before by the Prophetes for the saluation of Ierusalem: This is the acceptable time (sayth Esayas, 49. 8. and 2. Cor. 6. 2.) This is the day of saluation. Seeke the Lord while he may be found call vpon him, while he is neere, Esay, 55. 6. By this word peace he noteth after the Hebrew phrase all points of happines. He doth not simply say that Ierusalem knew not her peace, but those thinges which belonged to peace: for it saileth often out, that men are not ignorant of their happynes: but the way & meanes (as they say) they know not, they are so blinded with malice. But sith this reproofe is mixed with mercy, let vs note that the excellent gifts menne are indued with, the greater punishment are they woorthy of, because that to their other sinnes is added a sacrilegious profanation of the heavenly grace.

Secondly, let vs note that the neerer God approacheth vnto vs, and professeth the light of sound doctrine if we neglect this occasion, we are so much the lesse to be excused. The gate of saluation is alwayes open : but because he sometime is silent, it is no smal nor common benefit, when as he calleth vs vnto him with a loud voice and familiarly : and therefore there remaineth the sharper, reuenge for that contempt. *But now are they hidde.* This is not spoken for the lessening of the fault of Ierusalem : for her wonderfull blockithnesse is noted as a shamefull cause, why shee could not see God being present. I graunt that it becometh onely vnto God to open the minde of them that are blind : and no man can be able to see the milteries of the heauenly kingdome, but he whom God lyghateneth inwardlye with his spirite : but they are not therefore worthy of forgiveness, which perishe through their owne beastly blindness. Christ also purposed to take awaye the offence, which otherwise might bee a hinderaunce to the rude and weake. For when as the eyes of all menne were cast vpon that cittie, the example of that Citie was of great importaunce of both sides eyther to worke mischeife or to doe good. Therefore least theyr incredulitie and proude contempt of the gospell should hinder any man, it is condemned of filthy blindness.

41. *The dayes shall come vpon thee.* Nowe taking vpon him, as it were the person of a iudge, hee rebuketh Ierusalem more sharply. So also the Prophetes though they lamented wicheares their destruction, for whom they ought to be carefull, yet they gather their courage and hearts, and fall to leaue threatening: because they know that not onely the care of the saluation of men was laied vpon them : but also that they were appoynted preachers of Gods iudgements. Further, he sayeth that Ierusalem for this cause should suffer horrible punishments, because shee knew not the time of her visitation: that is, they contemned the redeemer which was sent them, and did not embrace nor accept his fauour. Now let the cruelty of the punishments which they suffered terrifie vs least we with our slouthelines do put out the light of saluation, but let vs be carefull to receiue the grace of God : yea let vs speedily runne forth to meete it.

Math. 21.

Marke, 11

Luke 19.

10. And when he was come into Ierusalem, all the Citie was moued, sayinge, who is this.

11. And the people sayde this is Iesus the prophet of Nazaret of Galile.

12. And Iesus wente into the temple of God, and cast out all them that sold and bought

11. So Iesus entred into Ierusalem, and into the temple and whē he had looked about in all thing, and now it was euening, he went forth vnto Bethania with the twelue.

12. And on the morrow, when they were come out from Bethania, hee was hungry.

13. And seeing a figg tree a farre off, that had leaues, hee went

39. Then some of the Pharises of the company said vnto him, master, rebuke thy disciples.

40. But he answered and sayde vnto them, Itell you, that if these shoulde holde their peace, the stones would cry.

A litle after.

45. Hee wense also into the

bought in the Temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, & the seats of them that sold doves.

13. And sayd vnto them, it is written, mine house shall bee called the house of prayer: but yee haue made it a denne of theenes.

14. Then the blind and the halte came to him in the temple, and he healed them.

15. But when the chiefe Priestes and Scribes sawe the meruailes that hee did, and the children crying in the temple, and saying, Hosanna, the sonne of David, they disdayned:

16. And sayde vnto him, hearest thou what these saye? And Iesus sayde vnto them, yea: reade yee neuer by the mouth of babes and sucklinges thou haste made perfecte the prayse?

17. So hee lefte them, and went out of the Cittie vnto Bethania, and lodged there.

18. And in the morninge, as he returned into the Cittie, he was hungry.

19. And seeing a figgetree in the way, hee came to it, and founde nothing thereon, but leaues onely, and sayde to it: neuer fruit grow on thee hence forwardes. And anon the figtree withered.

20. And when his disciples saw it, they meruailed, saying, how soone is the figtree withered?

21. And

went to see if hee might finde any thing thereon: but when he came vnto it, he found nothing but leaues: for the time of figs was not yet.

14. Then Iesus answered & sayde to it: neuer manne eate fruite of thee hereafter while the worlde standeth: and his disciples heard it.

15. And they came to Ierusalem, and Iesus went into the Temple, and beganne to cast out them, that sold and bought in the Temple, and overthrew the tables of the money changers, & the seates of them that sold doves.

16. Neither would he suffer that any manne shoulde cary a vessell through the temple.

17. And he taught, saying vnto them, is it not written, mine house shall bee called the house of prayer vnto all nations? but you haue made it a denne of theenes.

18. And the Scribes and high Priestes hearde it, and sought how to destroy him: for they feared him: because the whole multitude was astonied at his doctrine.

19. But when euen was come, Iesus went out of the citie.

20. And in the morning as they passed by, they saw the figtree dried vp from the rootes.

21. Then Peter remembred, and said vnto him, maister, behold, the figgetree, which thou cursedst is withered.

22. And Iesus answered and said vnto them, haue sayth in God.

the temple, and began to caste out them that sold therein, and them that bought.

46. Saying vnto them, it is written, mine house is the house of prayer, but yee haue made it a denne of theenes.

47. And he taught daily in the temple. And the high priests & the Scribes and the chiefe of the people sought to destroy him.

48. But they could not finde what they might do to him: for all the people hangd vppon him, when they heard him.

21. And Iesus answered and sayd unto them, verily I say vnto you, if ye haue sayth, and doubt not, ye shall not only do that, which I haue doone to the figtree, but also if you say to this mountaine, take thy selfe away, and cast thy selfe into the sea, it shall be done,

22. And whatsoeuer yee shall aske in prayer, if ye beleene, yee shall receive it.

23. For verily I say vnto you, that whosoever shal say vnto this mountaine, take thy selfe away, and cast thy selfe into the sea, and shall not waiver in his heart, but shal beleene that those thinges which he sayeth, shall come to passe, whatsoeuer hee saith shall be done to him.

24. Therefore I saye vnto you, whatsoeuer yee desire when ye pray, beleene that yee shall haue it, and it shall be done vnto you.

There seemeth to bee some diuersitie betweene Matthew and Marke in the report of the history of the withering of the figgetree. For matthew saith that this was done the next day after Christe hadde shewed himselfe as a king: but Marke seemeth to referre it to the day following that. Yet the answer is easie: for in this they agree, that Christe accursed the tree, when he came into the citie, the next day after his solemne entraunce. Onely Marke reporteth (that which Matthew omitted) that the disciples marked it the day following. Therefore though Marke noted the order of time more distinctly, yet there is no diuersity betweene them. Hee seemeth to differ aswell from Matthew, as from Luke in the history of reforming of buying and selling. For when as both of them say that Christe draue out the buyers and the sellers assoone as he entred into the citie and Temple: Marke simply sayth, that he looked about vpon all thinges: but referreth that casting of them forth to an other day. But I doe thus reconcile it, that when as he had not spoken of the cleansing of the Temple, and had after set it in an other place, hee sayth that he came the first day into the Temple, and there looked about vpon all thinges. For to what end did he looke so diligently about, but that he might reforme somewhat that was amisse? For he was wont to visit the temple often, so that it was not the newnesse of the sight that moued him. Further, where as Marke shoulde haue added presently after the casting of them out of the Temple, which bought and sold there, hee sayth that Christe went out of the citie: and that which he had omitted worthy of rehearfall, he reporteth after. Except that any man had rather say, that Marke in this history also obserued the circumstance of the time, which was omitted by the other two. For though they seeme to keepe a continuall course in the text: yet because they set downe no certaine day, it were no absurditie to deuide that which is reade ioynly together in them. Yet I doe rather allow of that opinion, which I sette downe before. For it is very likely that Christe before that great assembly of the people shewed that great token of his power. But whosoever shall obserue how little curiositie the Euangelistes doe vse in noting the times, the diuersitie in setting down this history wil not offend them.

10. When hee was come into Ierusalem. Matthew sayeth that the citie was moued, that wee might know that it was not a matter done secretly, nor by stealth, but

but in the sight of all the people the Priestes and Scribes knowing of it. Wherefore the maiestie of the spirit euidently appeared in that contemptible estate of the flesh. For how would al men haue suffred Christ to their great perill to bee brought into the Citie in a kingly pompe, if they had not bene all amased? Therefore this is the sum, Christ entred not secretly neyther were his enemies contēt therewith: for they despised him: but were rather restrained by a secret feare, because that God had stricken them so that they durst not attempt any thing. In the meane season the slouthfull security of the city is reprobued, and the religion of straungers is commēded, For in that the Citifens hearing that noyse doe demaund who that should bee, it appeareth that they are not of the company of them that followed Christ.

12. *Iesus entred into the temple.* When as he had gone often vp into the temple and had seene this corruptiō, he put his hand but twyse to reforme the same: once at the beginning of his ambassage, and nowe agayne when hee was come nie to the ende of the same. But sith there reigned filthy and prophaine confusion, and the Temple with the sacrificers was appoynted to bee destroyed, it was sufficient for Christe twyse to reprove openly the prophaning of the same. When as he shewed himselfe a prophet and a teacher sent from God, that he might waken the Iewes, make them the more attentue, he took vpon him to cleanse the temple. And onely Iohn toucheth this former historye in his seconde chapter. And now towards the end of his course, againe challenging the same authority to himselfe, admonisheth the Iewes of the pollutions of the temple, and sheweth with all that there is a newe reformation at hand. And in the meane season it is not to bee doubted but that hee shewed himselfe both king and high Priest, and president of the the temple, and of the worships of God: which must therefore bee noted, least anye priuate man thinke it lawfull for him to doe the like. It is meete that all godly men should haue this zeale, wherewith Christ was moued to doe this: but least any manne vnder pretence of imitation should run headlong rashly, it must be seene what his calling will beare, and how farre it behoueth vs to goe by the commandement of God. If any corruptions shall creepe into the Church of God, let all the children of God be grieued: but because God hath not armed euery mans hand, let them which are priuate men sigh for sorowe, vntill God shall giue remedy.

I graunt that they are to too blockish, that are not displeased with the pollution of the temple of God: neither is it sufficient for them to be inwardly griened, except they abstaine frō that corruption, & testific with their tongue so oft as occasion shall suffer, that they desire that such things should be reformed. But they which haue not publike authoritie, the faultes which they can not remedy with the hand, let them speake against with the tongue, which they haue at liberty: Yet it is demanded, when as Christ sawe the temple stuffed with grosse superstitions, why shuld he only reforme that so smal a corruption, or at least more tollerable amongst the. I answer, it was not christs purpose to restore all the holy ceremonies into their ancient vse, neither did he make

choyce, which corruptions were greater or lesser: but onely bent to this to shew by this one visible signe, that GOD hadde committed to him the charge of reforming the Temple, and would also declare that the worshipping of GOD was corrupted by this filthy and palpable abuse. They wanted not a pretence for that merchandise as that it eased the people of much trouble, that sacrifices should not be farre to seeke, also that there might be money readie at hand for every man that would offer. Neither were the tables for the money changers set, or the sacrifices offered to be sold, in the sanctuary but onely in the courte or porch, which is sometimes called by the name of the temple. But because that nothing was more inconuenient to the maiestie of the temple, then to haue a market set vp there of thinges to be sold, and to haue the money changers sit there to make their gaue by exchange, this prophanation was not to be borne with. And Christ inueighed sharpe against the same, for that it appeared that the couctousnes of the Priestes for filthye gaine sake, had brought in that custō. For as he which entred into a shop richly furnished with diuers kinds of wares, though he purposeth to buy nothing, yet being caught by those baightes, altereth his purpose, so the priests cast forth their nettes to catch offerings, that they might milke some gaine from every one of them.

13. *It is written.* Christe bringeth two testimonies taken out of two Prophetes: one out of the fiftie sixe Chapter of Isaiah, the other out of the seuenth of Jeremy. Further, that which Isaiah writte agreed to the circumstance of the time: for there is the calling of the Gentiles foretolde. Therefore Isaiah promisseth that God will not onely bringe to passe, that the Temple shalbe restored to the former bewtie but also that all the Gentyles shall come from every place thither. It is certaine that he speaketh metaphorically: for the Prophetes doe vnder the shadowes of the law set forth the spirituall worshipping of God, which shuld be vnder the kingdom of Christ. But this was neuer fulfilled, that all people should come to Ierusalem to worship. Therefore when he saith that the Temple shall be the place of prayer for all the Gentiles, is as much as if he should haue sayd, the Gentiles shall be gathered in to the Church of GOD, that together with the children of Abraham they might with one mouth call vpon the true GOD. But because he maketh mention of the temple for so much as it was then the visible seate and place of religion, Christ doth worthily reprove the Iewes, for that they most vilelye applied the same to other vses, then those whereto it was ordained.

The meaning therefore is, that God would that the temple should remaine vnto that time as a signe or marke, whereto all true worshippers should be bent. How vnworthily and how wickedly then doe they in turning it into a prophane market? But in Christes time that temple was the house of prayer, so long as the lawe with the shadowes of the same was in force: but it beganne to be the house of prayer to all nations, when as the doctrine of the gospel sounded from thence, whereby the whole world grewe into a consent of faith. And though it was shortly after destroyed, yet vnto this day appeareth the effect of this prophesie.

For sith the law came out of Sion, it is necessary that whosoever wil pray rightly, should looke to that beginning. I graunt that there is no difference of places: for the Lord will be called vpon every where: but as the saythfull, which professe themselves to worship the God of Israell, are sayde to speake the language of Canaan, and also to come into the temple, because that true religion sprang from thence: and that same was the fountaine of waters, which in shorte space were wonderfully encreased and flowed forth in great abundance, and they that drinke of the same shall liue as Ezechiell maketh mention, chap. 47.9. and those waters going out from the temple, doe spread themselves to the East and to the West. Though wee doe vse Churches at this day, for the meeting of the holy assemblies, yet it is for an other cause: for since that Christ came, he is not proposed vs in an outward and shadowish image, as hee was in tymes past to the fathers vnder the lawe. Furthermore, it is to bee noted, that the Prophet by this woorde *Prayer* meaneth the whole worshippe of God. For though there was at that time great abundance of ceremonies, yet God in few wordes taught the Iewes to what end all those ceremonies should be referred: namely, that they might spiritually worshippe him, as it is more plainly sette downe in the fiftie Psalme. For there doth God also call backe all the exercises of godlines to prayer.

But you haue made it. Christ declareth that the complaint of Ieremiah belongeth also to his time, wherein the temple was no lesse defiled. The Prophet rebuketh the hypocrites, which strengthening themselves with the temple, tooke themselves a liberty to sinne. For where it was the purpose of God, to instruct the Iewes by outward signes, as instructions to true godlines, as it is a comon matter for hypocrites to turne truth into a lye (as if it were sufficient to apply themselves to outward ceremonies) they were content with the vaine pretence of the temple. But the Prophet cryeth out against them, that God is not tyed to the temple, or bound to ceremonies: and therefore they boasted in vaine of the name of the temple, which they had made a denne of theeues. For as theeues doe more boldly sinne in their dennes, because they hope they shall escape with out punishment: so the hypocrites grow to be bolde vnder a faigned pretence of godlines, so that almost they are in hope to deceiue God.

Further, because that the Metaphor of a denne reacheth to all corruptions, Christe doeth very aptly apply the place of the Prophet to this present cause. Marke addeth that Christ forbade that no man should cary any vessell through the temple: that is, hee would not suffer any prophane thing to be seene there: for by the woorde vessell the Hebrewes doe signifie all kinde of furniture for a house. In summe, Christe tooke away whatsoever hindered the reuerence & maiestie of the temple.

14. *The blinde and the halte came vnto him.* Least that authoritie which Christe hadde taken vpon him more then hee was woonte, shoulde bee suspected of rashnesse, hee confirmed the same by myracles. Therefore healed hee the blinde and the halte in the Temple, that it might bee manifestly knowne that the right and honour of the Messias belonged to him. For the Prophetes doe describe and sette him forth with these markes, whereby wee see agayne that which I spake of a little before, that it is

not the parte of euery of the people to immitate this deede of Christe, least that vnaduisedly that manne shoulde lift vp himselfe into the throane of the Messias. This is to be noted, that the halt and the blinde, which were healed, were witness of the diuine power of Christe, as if God from heauen shoulde sanctifie with his voyce the speech of the multitude.

15. *When the chiefe Priestes and Scribes sawe the myracles.* Luke declareth that the Pharisees beganne to murmur nowe by the way. The disciples then onely cryed, and they woulde haue them commaunded to silence, Christ answered that they laboured in vaine: for God would rather make the stones to cry, then that hee woulde suffer the kingdome of his Sonne to bee ouerwhelmed. It is to be supposed that when there was no ende of crying, but that the children also ioyned themselues to them, the Scribes and Priestes waxed more angry: and then they assaulted Christ againe. And they seeme to nippe him very scornefully, while they cast in his teeth that hee seeketh for prayse of children. Further, it is to be noted, whereof they tooke their offence. That they were malicious, wicked, and deadly contemners of God, it appeareth by this, that they are as much vexed at the myracles, as at the happy and ioyfull cries. But now I seeke after some speciall matter, what it was that shoulde vex them most. We know how fiercely they fought for their estate: for hotly they sought to maintaine that tyranny, which they hadde once vsurped. And this hadde beene no small impayring of their kingdome, if it shoulde bee lawfull for the people to giue Christe the title of a king: yea, euen in the smallest matters they would haue the decrees holden for Oracles: so that it should not bee lawfull for to allow or to reiecte any thing, but according to their pleasure. Therefore they thinke it an absurde and peruerse course for the people to giue title of Messias to any man, whom they shall not thinke worthy of that degree. And certainly, it was meete, if they would haue done their duty, that they shoulde haue gone before the whole people, as leaders and guydes. For the Priestes were created to this end that all men might aske for the knowledge of the law of God from their lips, & also that they might be the Angels and interpreters of the God of hostes, *Mal. 1. 7.* But becaute they had wickedly extinguished the light of the truth, Christ answereth them very aptly, that they shall preuaile nothing in seeking to suppress the doctrine of saluation: because the stones shall rather vtter it. And in these wordes is contained a secret graunt: for Christe doeth not deny this to bee a preposterous order, that the vnlearned common people and children should first celebrate with their speech the coming of the Messias: but becaute that they doe maliciously cloake the truth, which shoulde bee the approued witness of the same, it is no meruaile if God rayse vppon others, and to their shame chuse children to doe it. Hereby wee reape no little comfort: for though the wicked labour all the wayes they can deuise to darken and hide the kingdome of Christe, heere wee heare that they labour in vaine. They hope that when of that company, which promote the kingdome of Christe, they shall kill some, and restraine others with feare, that they shall obtaine their purpose. But the Lord will deceiue them: for hee will rather giue mouthes and tongues to stones, rather then the kingdom of his Sonne shall want witnesses.

16. *Read yee neuer.* The Scribes and Priestes tooke occasion to quarrell at this, that Christe suffered the children to call him a king : as the wicked ones doe alwayes disdainefully despise the humility of Christes disciples . Christe reprooueth this malice with the testimony of Dauid, who also maketh the very infants preachers of his glory. These are the very wordes: Out of the mouth of babes and sucklings hast thou ordained strength, Psal. 8. 3. whereby Dauid declareth, that though all tongues shoulde keepe silence, God needeth not any other Rethoricians to set forth his power, then young infantes, which as yet hang vpon their mothers breasts . They are dumbe : but the wonderfull prouidence of God, which shineth in them , is as eloquence loudly and well speaking his prayse. For hee that considereth with himselfe, how the fruite is engendred in the wombe of the mother , is nourished there the space of nine moneths, commeth forth at the length into the light, and findeth meate prepared for it as soone as it is borne : must of necessitie not only finde & feele that God is the maker of the worlde, but is wholly caryed into an admiration of the same. So the Sunne and Moone, though they be creatures without tongues, yet it is sayde that they haue vtterance & speech, to declare and sing the prayses of God, Psal. 19. 1. Seeing then that the tongues of infants doe sound forth the prayses of God, Christ doth hereby gather, that it is no absurdity if he haue the voyce of those children which now can speake.

18. *And in the morning as he returned .* Betweene that solemne entrance of Christ, where of we heard, and the day of the Passouer, hee lodged every night at Bethany, and on the day time he was teaching in the temple. And Matthew & Marke doe reporte a history which befell at that time by the way, that Christ as hee came into the City was an hungred, came to a figgetree: and when hee found nothing thereon but leaues, hee cursed it : and the tree being cursed with his word, withered presently. Further, I take this for graunted, that Christ did not faine, but was truly an hungred. For we know that of his owne accord he became subiect to our infirmities, though by nature hee was free and voyde of them. But the difficultie standeth in this, how hee should bee deceiued to seeke for fruite vpon a tree that was without : especially when as the times of figges was not yet come: Further, why is his anger so hot against a harmelesse tree? But no absurditie can follow, if wee say, that as a man hee knew not what kinde of tree it was : yet it may be that he not being ignorant of the ende, came vnto it of purpose. But hee is not caried with any heate of anger to curse it : for that were not only an vnrighteous, but also a childish & ridiculous reuengemēt. But whē as hunger was grieuous vnto him in respect of the flesh, he fought to overcome the same with a contrary affection : namely, that hee might set forth the glory of the father, as he sayeth in an other place. My meate is, that I may doe the will of my father, Iohn 4. 34. for there also he doth strue with wearines and thirst : and I do rather incline to this opinion, that hunger was as a meanes prouoking him to worke this myracle, and to teach his disciples. Therefore when as hee was an hungred, and had not meat ready, hee fedde himselfe otherwise : namely in setting forth the glory of God. And his will was by the tree to giue a token, what end remaineth for hypocrites, and also to declare how vaine their boasting is, and to no purpose.

19. *Neuer fruit grow on thee hence forward.* Hereby we learne what this worde a cursing meaneth namely, that this tree is condemned to be barren: so againe God blesteth, when by his word he maketh fruitfull. But it doth more euidently appeare by marke, that the figgetree did not presently wyther, or at the least that the disciples did not marke it, vntill the next day that they sawe the leaues fallen off. Marke also doth attribute that to Peter alone, which Matthew doth commonly refer to all the disciples: but when as Christ answereth in the plurall number, it is easie to be gathered that one asked the question in the name of all the rest.

21. *And Iesus answered.* Christe extendeth the vse of the myracle further, that hee might encourage his disciples to sayth and confidence. In Marke there is first sette downe a generall exhortation, that they should haue sayth in God. Then followeth a promise, that they shall obtaine by sayth, whatsoeuer they shall aske of God. To haue sayth with God, signifieth as much as to promise himselfe certainly, and to looke for from God, whatsoeuer is needefull. But because that sayth, if there bee any in vs, doth presently breake out into prayers, and pierceth into those treasures of the grace of God, which are shewed in the woordes, that it might enioy the same: therefore Christ addeth prayer to sayth, for if hee hadde onely sayde that wee should haue whatsoeuer wee shall desire, sayth to some might seeme to bee too imperious, or too secure. Wherefore Christe declareth that they do then beleue a right, which trusting in his goodnesse and promises, doe humbly flee vnto him. This is a notable place to expresse the force & nature of faith: namely, that it is a certaine assurance resting in the goodnesse of God without any doubtfulnesse. For Christe doth not acknowledge any others to beleue, but them which doe vndoubtedly accounte God to bee mercifull to them, and doubt not but that hee will giue what they doe aske. Wherefore wee see with what a deuilish imagination the Papistes are bewitched, which doe mixe faith and doubting together: nay, they charge vs with foolish presumption, if wee being perswaded of the fatherly fauour of God towards vs, dare bee so bolde as to present our selues before him. And Paule doeth especially commend this benefite of Christe, that by sayth in him wee haue boldnesse and entrance to God with confidence, Ephe, 3.12. Furthermore, this place doth teach, that the true examination of faith, is contained in prayers. If any man doe obiecte that these prayers were neuer heard, that mountaines should cast themselves into the sea: The answer is easie. Christ doeth not slacke the raynes to mens prayers, that they should desire what they lust, while hee maketh their prayers subiecte to the rule of sayth. For so it is necessary that the spirite should bridle all our affections, and bring them into obedience to the woordes of God. Christ requireth a certaine and assured confidence in prayer without doubting. And whence shall the minde of man conceiue this, but out of the word of God? Now then we do see that Christ promised nothing to his disciples, except they keepe themselves within the bounds of the good will of God.

LVKE. 47. *And hee taught daily in the Temple.* Marke and Luke doe firste teache, of what kinde of menne the Church consisteth, that is of the simple people: Again, what enemies Christe hadde: namely, the Priestes and Scribes, and all the chiefe rulers. And this is a part of the foolishnesse:

lishnesse of the crosse, that God passing by the excellent thinges of the worlde, chuseth that which is foolish, weake, and despised. Then they make mention that those good gouernours of the church of God sought the meanes to destroy Christ: whereby their wickednesse and vngodlynesse was detected. For though it were graunted that they hadde iust cause to persecute Christe, yet it was not lawfull for them a'ter the maner of the theecues to come out to kill him, or secretly to send forth cutters against him. Thirdly, they teach that their wicked conspiracie was repressed: because that Christ by the secrete counsell of God, was appoynted to the death of the crosse.

Mathewe 21.

Marke 11.

Luke 10.

23. And when hee was come into the Temple, the chiefe priestes, and the elders of the people came vnto him, as he was teaching and sayd, by what authority doest thou these thinges? and who gaue thee this authority?

24. Then Iesus answered and sayde vnto them: I also will aske of you a certaine thinge, which if ye tell me, I likewise wil tell you by what authority I doe these thinges.

25. The baptisme of Iohn whence was it? from heauen, or of menne? Then they reasoned amonge themselves, saying: if we shall say from heauen, he will say vnto vs: why did yee not then beleue him.

26. And if wee saye of men, we feare the people: for all holde Iohn as a Prophet.

27. Then they answered Iesus, and sayde, wee cannot tell. And he sayd vnto them, neither tell I you by what authoritye I doe these thinges.

27. Then they came againe to Ierusalem, and as he walked in the Temple, there came to him the hie priestes, and the scribes, and Elders.

28. And sayd vnto him: By what authority dost thou these thinges? and who gaue thee this authority that thou shouldest doe these thinges?

29. Then Iesus answered and sayd vnto them, I will also aske of you a certaine thing, and answer you mee, and I will tell you by what authority I doe these thinges.

30. The baptisme of Iohn, was it from heauen, or of menne answer me.

31. And they thought with themselves, saying: If we shall say from heauen, hee will say: Why then did yee not beleue him?

32. But if wee say of menne, we feare the people: for all men counted Iohn, that he had bene a very Prophet.

33. Then they answered and sayd vnto Iesus, we cannot tell. And Iesus answered, and sayd vnto them, neither wil I tel you by what authoritye I doe these thinges.

1. And it came to passe, that on one of those daies, as hee taught in the temple, and preached the gospell, the hie priestes and the scribes came vpon him with the Elders.

2. And spake vnto him, saying: tell vs by what authority thou doest these thinges, or who is he that hath giuen thee this authority?

3. And he answered & said vnto them, I also will aske you one thing, tell me therefore.

4. The baptisme of Iohn, was it from heauen, or of men?

5. And they reasoned within themselves, saying: if we shall say from heauen, he will say, why then beleueed ye him, not?

6. But if wee shall saye of men, all the people will stone vs: for they bee perswaded that Iohn was a Prophet.

7. Therefore they answered that they coule not tell whence it was.

8. Then Iesus said vnto them neither tel I you by what authoritye I doe these thinges.

23. By

23. By what authoritie dost thou these things. Because their other purposes and open attempts did not proceede, nowe the Priestes and Scribes doe ouerthwartly trie, if they may by any meanes driue him from his maner of teaching. But they quarrell not with him for his doctrine it selfe, whether it be true or no, for that they had often tried that in vaine: but they moue the question of his calling and of the commandement. And this was a goodly colour: for sith no man might thrust himselfe eyther into the honour of the priesthoode, or into the office of a prophet, but must waite for his calling from God: much lesse is it lawfull for any man, to take vpon him the name of the Messias, except it may euidently appeare, that he is chosen thereunto of God. For he must be appointed not onely by the word of God, but also by his oath, as it is written in the Psalme. 110. 4. But they deale very puerly and wickedly, because that when the diuine maiestie of Christ had bene declared by many myracles, as though they were ignorant of all thinges, they inquire from whence he came. For what is more absurde when they saw the hand of God stretched forth in healing the halte and the blinde, to doubt whether a priuate man hath rashly taken this authoritie vpon him. Further, it was more then sufficiently proued before, that Christ was sent from heauen: so that they coulde doe no lesse, then to allow of his deedes in their heart, when they acknowledged God to be the author of them. Therefore they rest vpon this, that hee is not a lawfull minister of God, whome they shall not chuse with their voyces, as if the whole power were in their handes. But though they were lawfull gouernours of the Church, yet it were a monstrous thing for them to list themselves against God. Now we vnderstand why Christ doth not directly answere them: because that wickedly and shamelesly, they asked him a question of a matter euidently knowne.

25. The baptisme of Iohn. Christe asketh the question of the baptisme of Iohn, not onely that hee might shewe that they are vnworthy of all authority, because they hadde despised the holy Prophet of GOD: but also that he might reprove them in their owne answere, impudently pretending ignorance of a matter euidently knowne: For it must bee remembered, wherefore Iohn was sent, what his message was, what matter hee specially bent himselfe vnto. He was sent as a cryer to proclaime Christe: hee slackt not those thinges he was set about: and he chalenged nothing to himselfe, but that he might prepare the way to the Lorde. Further, hee poynted out Christe with his finger, and testified that hee was the onely sonne of God. Nowe then, whence would the Scribes haue the newe authoritie of Christe approoued vnto them, when as the baptisme of Iohn hadde made a lawfull and assured triall of the same? Nowe we see that Christe vsed not any crafty subtelty to auoide them, but answered the question proposed wholly and fully: for Iohn could not be acknowledged for the seruant of God, but that Christ must be acknowledged for the Lord. So he armed not frowarde men, whiche without any commandement, but of their owne presumption, dare take a publike office vpon them: neither doeth hee by his example teach any sophisticall arte for the concealing of the trueth, as many subtile menne doe falsly alledge him for their author. I grant that a man must not alwayes answere after one maner, especially if the enemies lay snares to catch vs: but their malice must

be so wisely avoyded, that truth bee not left vndefended . But baptisme is not taken in this place onely for the outwarde signe of washing, but for the whole ministerie of Iohn. For Christ would haue had this answered, whether Iohn was a true and lawfull prophet of God, or a deceiuer. Yet this sentence cōtaineth a profitablen doctrine, whether the baptisme of Iohn bee from God or of men: for thereby we gather, that the godly may not admit amongst them any doctrine or sacrament, except it may appeare that the same proceeded from god, neither is it in the power of men to coyne any other at their pleasure. Hee speaketh of Iohn, whom the Lord other where doeth highly commend aboue all the Prophets. Yet Christe sayeth that his baptisme may not bee receiued, except the same be commanded of God. What then shall be saide of those fained Sacraments, which are fondly brought in by menne of no value, without any commandement of God? For Christ doth openly declare in these wordes, that the whole gouernement of the Church doth depend vpon the direction of God, so that it is wickednes for men to bring in any thing of themselves.

They thought amongst themselves. The wickednesse of the Priestes is heereby shewed, they consider not what is true, neither doe they aske their owne conscience: nay, they had rather most vilely to turne backward, then to confesse that which they know to be true, least any poynt of their tyranny should be lost. So all the godlesse, though they seeme desirous to learne, yet they shutte the gate against the truth, if they thinke it to be against their gaine. Therefore Christ doth not send them away without an answer, but sendeth them away ashamed and confounded: and alledgeth so much of the testimony of Iohn, as sufficeth to shew that he doth it by the power of God.

Matth. 21.

Marke.

Luke

28. But what thinke yee? A certaine manne had two sonnes, and came to the elder, and sayde: Sonne, goe and worke to day in my vineyard.

29. But hee answered and sayde, I will not: yet afterward he repented himselfe, and went.

30. Then he came to the second, and said likewise. And he answered and said, I will sir: yet he went not.

31. Whether of them twaine did the will of the father? They sayde vnto him. The first. Iesus sayde vnto them: Verily I say vnto you, that the Publicans and the harlots shall go before you into the kingdom of God.

32. For Iohn came vnto you in the way of righteousness, and yee beleeued him not: but the Publicanes and the harlots beleued him: and ye, though ye saw it, were not moued with repentance afterward, that yee might beleene him.

This clause sheweth to what ende this parable tendeth, when as Christe pre-

preferreth them which were notorious, infamous and abominable people before the Scribes & the priests. For hee discouereth, these hypocrites, that they should no more boast themselves for the ministers of God, and pretend a vaine shew of godlines. For though their ambition, and pride, and cruelty, and couetousnes, were knowne to all men, yet they would be accounted otherwise. And when as lately they assaulted Christ, they fained themselves very carefull for the order of the church, as if they had beene faithfull and carefull preferuers of the same. So, sith they so grossely mocke with God and men, Christ reprimoueth their impudencie, shewing that they were nothing lesse then such as they boasted themselves, and were so farre from that dignity wherewith they flattered themselves, that they should sit beneath the Publicans and harlots. For in that they professed themselves to be the chiefe maintainers of the worship of God, & zealous of the law, Christ saith that this is euen like, as if a sonne should only in word promise obedience vnto him, and yet shuld deceiue him. As concerning Publicans and harlots, he excuseth not their sinnes, but compareth their dissolute life, & the disobedience of an vntoward & disobedient sonne together, who at the first reiecteth his fathers commaundement: but he sheweth that he did much better in this, because they do not continue in their sinnes to the end, but they rather become meeete and apt to beare the yoke which they had so disdainfully refused. Now we vnderstand the purpose of Christ. Hee doth not only reprove the priests & Scribes, for that they do stubbornly resist God, & do not repent after so many admonitions: but he spoyleth the of that honour, wherof they were vnworthy: because their vngodlines was worse then the wantonnes of harlots.

30. *I will fir.* This phrase is borrowed of the Hebrew tongue. For when the Hebrews would offer their seruices, and woulde say that they were ready to obey, they vse these wordes: Beholde, I am ready sir. And it is a vertue of it selfe prayse worthy, to be willing and ready to obey, as soone as God shal speake the word. Neither doth Christ in this place commend slacknes: but when as there is fault in both, after a man hath linged long, at length to go to his labour, and in words to professe that which thou wilt not performe, christ teacheth that this hypocritie is more intollerable, then that stubbornnesse which in proceesse of time is tamed.

23. *For Iohn came vnto you.* Because that Iohn was a faithfull minister of God, Christ referreth whatsoever he taught to God himselfe. This speach had beene more full and plaine, God came preaching righteousness in the mouth of Iohn: but because that Iohn spake in the name of God, and not as a priuate manne, hee is aptly sette in the place of God. And this place giueth no small authority to the preaching of the the woorde, while they are accounted subborne and disobedient against him, who soeuer they are, which shall despise the godly and holy admonitions of a teacher sent by him. Some do more subtilly expound this woorde righteousness, whome I doe permitte to vse their owne sense. But in my iudgement it signifieth nothing else, then that doctrine of Iohn was sound and right: as if hee should haue said, that there was no cause why they shuld reiect the same. Further, when he saith that the publicans beleeued, his meaning is, that they did not only allow of the word, but did with earnest affectiō embrace that which they heard. Wherby we gather that this of it selfe

is not faith, if any man subscribe to sound doctrine : but it comprehendeth a greater and a deeper matter, that the hearer renouncing himselfe should giue his life wholly to God. When he sayeth that they were not moued with such an example, hee amplifieth their obstinate malice. For this were a token of extreme desperation, at the least not to follow harlots and Publicanes.

Matthew 21.

Marke 12.

Luke 20.

33. Heare another parable, there was a certaine household, which planted a vineyard, and hedged it round about, and made a wine presse therein, & built a tower, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a strange country.

34. And when the time of the fruit drew neare, hee sent his seruants to the husbandmen, to receive the fruites thereof.

35. And the husbandmen tooke his seruantes, and beate one, and killed another, and stoned another.

36. Again he sent other seruants, more then the first : and they did the like vnto them.

37. But last of al he sent vnto them his owne sonne, saying, they will reuerence my sonne.

38. But when the husbandmen saw the sonne, they said among themselues, this is the heire : come, let vs kill him, and let vs take his inheritaunce.

39. So they tooke him, and cast him out of the vineyard, and slew him.

40. When therefore the Lord of the vineyard shall come, what will hee doe to those husbandmen.

41. They said vnto him, he wil cruelly destroy those wicked men, and will let out his vineyard vnto other husbandmen, which shall deliuer him the fruites in their seasons.

42. Iesus

1. And hee began to speake vnto them in parables, a certaine manne planted a vineyard, and compassed it with an hedge, & digged a pit for the wine presse, and builde a towre in it, and let it out to husbandmen, and went into a strange country. 2. And at a time, he sent to the husbandmen a seruant, that hee might receiue of the husbandmen, of the fruit of the vineyard. 3. But they tooke him and beate him, and sent him away emptie.

4. And againe, he sent vnto them another seruant, and at him they cast stones, and brake his head, and sent him away shamefully handeled.

5. And againe he sent another, and him they slew, and many other, beating some, & killing some.

6. Yet had hee one sonne his deare beloued: him also he set the last vnto them, saying: they will reuerence my sonne

7. But the husbandmen said among themselues, this is the heire come: let vs kil him, & the inheritance shall be ours.

8. So they tooke him, and killed him, and cast him out of the vineyard.

9. What shall the Lord of the vineyard doe he wil come & destroy these husbandmen, & giue the vineyard to others.

10. Hane

9. Then began he to speake to the people this parable. A certaine man planted a vineyard, and let it forth to husbandmen: and went into a strange country for a great season.

10. And at a time he sent a seruant to the husbandmen, that they should giue him of the fruit of the vineyard, but the husbandmen did beate him, and sent him away emptie.

11. Againe, he sent yet another seruant, and they did beate him, and foule intreated him, & sent him away emptie.

12. Morcouer, he sent the third, and him they wounded, and cast out.

13. Then sayd the Lord of the vineyard, what shall I doe? I will sende my beloued sonne: it may be that they will doe reuerence, when they see him.

14. But when the husbandmen saw him, they reasoned with themselues saying: this is the heire: come, lette vs kil him, that the inheritaunce may be ours.

15. So they cast him out of the vineyard, and killed him, what shall the Lords of the vineyard, therefore doe vnto them?

16. He

42. Iesus sayd vnto them, read ye neuer in the scriptures : the stone which the builders refused, the same is made the head of the corner? This was the Lords doing, and it is maruailous in our eyes.

43. Therefore said I vnto you, the kingdome of God, shall bee taken from you, and shall bee giuen to a nation, which shall bring forth the fruites thereof.

44. And who soeuer shall fall on this stone, he shall be broken: but on whom soeuer it shall fall, it will grinde him to powder.

45. And when the cheife Priests & Pharises had heard his parables they perceyued that hee spake of them.

46. And they seeking to lay hands on him, feared the people, because they tooke him as a prophet.

10. Haue ye not read so much as this scripture? The stone which the builders refuse, is made the head of the corner.

11. This was done of the Lorde, and it is maruailous in our eyes.

12. Then they went about to take him, but they feared the people for they perceiued hee spake that parable against them therefore they left him, & went their way.

16. He wil come and destroy those husbandmen, and will giue out his vineyarde to others. But when they hearde it, they said, God forbid.

17. And he beheld them, and said: what meaneth this them that is written, the stone that the builders refused, that is made the head of the corner?

18. Who soeuer shall fall vpon that stone, shall be broken: and on whom soeuer it shall fall, it will grinde him to powder.

19. Then the high priests, & the Scribes this same houre went about to lay handes on him: (but they feared the people) for they perceyued that hee had spoken this parable against them.

33. Heare another Parable. The wordes of Luke doe somewhat differ from these, for he sayth that Christ spake to the multitude: and the speech is here directed to the Priests and Scribes. But this is easily answered, for though Christ bent his speache to them, yet hee discouered their shame before all the people. When Marke sayth that Christ began to speake in parables, hee omitteth that which was first in order: as also in other places of the whole, he onely toucheth a part. The summe of the parable is this, it is no new thing, if the priestes and other gouernours of the church, doe endeuour wickedly to defraud God of his right, for they haue vsed the like theeuery before against the Prophets, & now they are ready to slay the sonne, but they shall not escape vnpunished: for God will arise to reuenge his owne right. And this is spoken for two principall causes: first, that he might reprove the priestes of vnthankesfullnes full of infidelity and wickednesse: then that hee might take away the offence, which might bee taken of his death which was so neare at hand. For they had preuailed so much by their false title, amongst the false and simple people, so that religion amongst the Iewes, depended of their will and pleasure. Therefore Christ prepareth the weak before, & teacheth that such the priestes in times past haue slaine so many Prophets one vpon an other, there is no cause why any man should be troubled if the like example be also wrought in his owne person. But now let vs consider euery part of the same.

Hee planted a vineyarde. This similitude is often found in the scripture. As concerning this present place, this is Christes onely meaning, that when God

God placeth pastours ouer his church, hee giueth not ouer his right vnto them, but dealeth in like maner, as if a housholder should set out a vineyard or a field to a husbandman, who bestowing his labour in dressing it, should pay yearly fruite for the same. And as he complained by Esay, 5. 4. and Iere. 2. 21. that the vineyarde, about the dressing whereof hee had bestowed much labour and cost, brought forth no fruit: so in this place he accuseth the keepers of his vineyard, who as strong theues tooke all the profit to themselues. This saying of Christ, that the husbandmen receiued the vineyard well dressed and laboured at the hand of the housholder, doth not a little increase their faulte, for the better they were dealt with, the more worthy they are to be abhorred for their vnthankfullnesse Paule vseth this argument, 1. Tim. 3. 15. when he would exhort the pastours diligently to doe their dutie, because they were stewardes, chosen to gouerne the house of God, which is the pillar and ground of the truth And well, for the excellenter and the more honourable their state is, so much the more bound are they to God, not to follow his wooke slouthfully, but diligently. So much the more is their vnfaithfullnesse to be detested (as was said euen now) which doe scornefully abuse so great liberalitye and honour which God hath vouchsafed to bestow vpon them. But God planted a vineyarde, when he being mindefull of his free adoption, had seperated againe the people deliuered out of Egypt as peculiar vnto himselfe, and testified that he would be their God and father, and had called them into the hope of eternall saluation. For this is the planting whereof there is mention made in Esay 60. 21. and in other places. By the winepresse and tower, are vnderstoode those meanes and helpes which were ioyned to the doctrine of the lawe, for the nourishment of the faith of the people, as the sacrifices and other ceremonies. For God as a prouident and carefull housholder, vsed all diligence for the feeding of his Church, with all the helpes that might be.

30. *Hee set it out to husbandmen.* God might of himselfe haue preserved the estate of the Church in good order without the helpe of men: but hee taketh men for his ministers, and vseth their hands for helpe. So in times past he appoynted the Priests, that they should be as dressers of the vineyard. But it is maruayle why Christe shoulde compare the Prophetes to seruantes which are sent at the ende of the vintage to aske for fruite. For wee knowe that they also were vine dressers, and had one charge in common with the priests committed vnto them. I answere, it was not necessary for Christe to shew what agreement or difference there was betweene these two orders. The Priestes were created at the first for this cause, that they might thoroughly furnish the Church with sound doctrine, but when they eyther of slouthfulnessse or of ignorance neglected the worke committed vnto them, the Prophetes were sent as an extraordinary supply, which shoulde purge the vine of hurtfull weedes, shoulde cut off superfluous loppe, and shoulde supply all things that were wanting through the negligence of the Priestes: and yet further they should sharply reprocue the people, restore religion decayed, stirre vppe slouthfull mindes, and bring them backe againe to the worshippe of GOD and newnesse of life. And what was this else, but to aske for fruite due vnto the Lord of his vineyard? the which Christe doeth aptly and truly apply to the purpose.

pose. Neither yet was the continuall regiment of the Church established in the Prophets, but the priests alwayes kept it in their handes: euen as if a slouthfull husbandman forsaking husbandry, should yet vnder pretence of the possession keepe the place whereunto hee was once appoynted.

35. *They beate one.* Marke and Luke doe somewhat differ in this place from Mathewe: for when as he maketh mention of many seruantes, and when they were all euill and cruelly handled, there was a greater number sent againe: they onely sette euery manne in his seuerall order, as if there were not two or three sent together, but one after another. And though they had all one generall purpose: namely, that the Iewes would attempt the like against the Sonne, of that which they had so often done against the Prophets: yet Mathew doeth declare the matter it selfe more plainly: that is, that God by sending many Prophets, sheweth the malice of the priests. Whereby it appeareth howe outrageous their madnesse was, which could not be reformed by any meanes.

37. *They will reuerence my sonne.* This thought doeth not properly belong to God. For hee knewe what should come to passe, neyther was hee deceiued with the hope of any better success: but it is a common thing, especially in paraboles to attribute humane affections to him. Neyther yet is this added without a cause, for Christ would shew as in a glasse, howe desperate their wickednesse was, whereof this was too euident a testimonie for them with a deuillish madnesse to arise against the Sonne of God, who came to bring them againe into their right minde. As they hadde done before whittly in them, to driue God out of his possession, by the cruell slaughter of the Prophets: so this was the greatest sinne of all, to slay the Sonne that they might raigne as in a house without an heire. For this was the cause why the Priestes did rage so against Christ, least they should loose their tyranny as a pray. For it is he whom God the father would haue raign, and to whom he hath giuen all authoritie, The Euangelistes doe also somewhat vary in the end. For Mathewe sayeth that they began to make a confession against themselves, wherein they condemned themselves: Marke simply sayth that Christ declared what punishment should light vpon so wicked and vngodly seruantes. Luke seemeth plainly to differ from them both: saying that they withstoode and were against the iudgement which Christ had pronounced. But if wee marke the meaning better there is no diueristy amongst them, for it is not to bee doubted, but that they would agree vnto Christ, that such seruants had deserued that plague: but when they sawe both the sinne and the iudgement layd vpon themselves, they would shift it off.

42. *Read you neuer in the scriptures?* That must be remembred which we spake a litle before, when as the priestes and Scribes had the people bound vnto the, this principle was comon amongst them, that they onely were the lawfull arbiters & iudges of the redemption to come: so that no man might be receiued for the Messias, but he who they by their liking & consent should allow of. Therefore they affirme that christ had spoken a thing impossible, & they should slay the son & heire of the lord of the vineyard. But christ confirmeth it by the testimony of

of the scripture: & he asketh the question very vehemently: as if he had said: You account it a great absurdity, that it should come to passe, that the husbandmen to whom the vineyard was lette, should so wickedly conspire against the sonne of God. What hath the scripture foretolde that he should be chearefully and ioyfully receiued, and that the rulers themselues should not rather be against him? The place also which he citeth, is taken out of the Psalme 118. 22, from whence that happy and ioyfull cry was fetched, O Lorde saue nowe, blessed be hee that commeth in the name of the Lorde. And this was prophesied of the kingdome of the Messias, as it doeth appeare there, in that God created Dauid king, with this condition, that his throne should stand for euer, so long as the Sunne and Moone shall shine in heauen, and being decayed it should by the grace of God be restored into the former estate. Therefore whereas that Psalme containeth a description of the kingdom of Dauid, it promiseth withall, that it shall bee perpetual, and restored againe. If this had beene spoken of a temporall kingdome, Christ should haue improperly drawne it vnto himselfe. But this must alwayes bee noted, that the kingdome which God erected in the person of Dauid: was established in the true Messias vnto the ende of the world. For that annoynting in times past was but a shadow of this. Whereby it is gathered, that that which was begun in Dauid, was a paterne and figure of Christ. Nowe let vs returne to the woordes of the Psalme. The Scribes and Priestes thought it incredible, that Christ shuld be reiecte of the rulers of the Church. But hee proueth out of the Psalme, that by the wonderfull prouidence of God he should be placed in his throne against the will of menne: and that was figured longe before in Dauid, whome God tooke when hee was reiecte by the mighty powers of the world, that he might declare and shew, what he woulde worke at the length in his Christ. And the Prophet boroweth a Metaphore of buildings. For because the Church is the holy house of God, Christ vpon whom it is builded, is called the cornerstone: that is, the stone which beareth the whole weight of the building. This similitude holdeth not out square on every side, if a man should sit out euery particuler poynt which belongeth to Christ: but it agreeth very well in this, that the saluation of the Church lyeth vpon him, & hee vpholdeth the estate of the same. So other Prophets also foliowed the same phrase and manner of speaking, especially Isaias 28. 16. and Daniel. But Isaias alludeth very neare vnto this place, who bringeth in God speaking thus. Beholde, I will lay in Sion a foundation stone, a stone tryed and precious, whereat both the houses of Israell shall stumble. And in the newe Testament this manner of speech is often founde. Therefore the summe is, that the kingdome of God shoulde bee builded vpon a stone, which the chiefe builders themselues shoulde cast away as rubbish and nothing worth. And the meaning is, that the Messias who is the foundation of the saluatiō of the church, shoulde not bee chosen by the common voyces of menne: but when the chiefe rulers, to whome the care of the building is committed, should be against him, God woulde woonderfully exalte him by a secrete and vn hoped for power. But here are two things for vs to beholde: for GOD least the endeouours of the wicked, which rise vppe to hinder the buildinge of the Church shoulde trouble vs, hee admonyssheth vs before, that it shoulde so come to passe.

Then he declareth withall, that in the erection of the kingdome of Christe, whatsoeuer men shall labour to the contrary, his power shall preuaile, we must diligently obserue both. It is wonderfull that the authour of saluation should be reiected, not by strangers, but by them of the houthold: and not of the foolish people, but of the gouernours themselves, who had the gouernance of the Church in their handes, Against such outrageous fury of menne, faith must be nourished and supported, least it should fainte and fall away at the straungenesse of the matter. Nowe we vnderstande howe profitable that forwarning was, which putteth the mindes of the godly out of that feare, which they might otherwise conceiue, at that sorowfull sight. For there is nothing more straunge, then the members should rise against the heade, the husbandmenne against their Lord, the counsellours against their kinge, and the chiefe builders to cast away the foundation from the building. There is also more efficacie in the other clause, where God declareth that the wicked shall preuaile nothing by reiecting Christ, but that he shall haue his dignity whole and perfect: namely, that this faithfull trusting in this promise, might safely as out of a fort, laugh at the ouerthwart pride of men in reiecting Christ. For when they haue done all that they may yet Christ will in spite of them holde that place which his father hath giuen. Though they which seeme to haue honour and power, shall forcibly sette themselves against him, yet notwithstanding he will stand in his estate and yelde nothinge at all vnto them for all their wicked contempt. To bee thorte, the power of God shall preuaile, so that hee shall bee the stone tried and precious, which shall vpholde the Church, kingdome and temple of God.

Further, he is called the heade stone of the corner, not as that he were only a part of the foundation (when as it appeareth by other places that the Church is firmlye builded vpon him alone) but the simple meaninge of the Prophet was this, that he should be the chiefe stay of the building. Some doe very curiously discourse of the worde *Corner*, that Christ was placed in a corner, that he might ioyne together two diuers walles namely, the Gentiles and the Iewes. Yet in my iudgement Dauid had no further respect, then that the corner stone vpholdeth the chiefe weight of the building.

Nowe it is demanded why the spirite should call them *Chiefe builders*, which doe onely seeke the ruine and destruction of the Church of God. For Paule doeth therefore glory that he is a good maister builder, 1. Cor. 3. 11. because he builded the Church vpon Christ alone. The answer is easie. Though they vnfaithfully did discharge the charge committed vnto them yet he granteth them this title in respect of their callinge. So deceiuers haue often the name of Prophets: and they are called shepherds which as wolues deuoure the flocke. Neither doe they get so much honour as shame by this title, while they roote vpe the foundation of the Church of GOD, when they were appoynted to be chiefe in building the same. Heereof is this profitable lesson gathered, that notwithstanding their lawfull calling, they may be wicked and vngodly ennemies of Christ, which should be his ministers.

It is euident that the Priesthoode of the lawe was ordained of God, and that the Lord committed the authoritie of gouerning the Church

to the Levites : doe they therefore faithfully discharge their office? should he become the godly to denie Christ to obey them? Nowe let the Pope goe with his horned Bish. ops, & let them boast that they should be beleeced in all things, because they supply the place of shepheardes. If we should grant that they are rightly called to the gouernment of the Church: yet it is in vaine that they challenge vnto themselves more then the titles of the prelates of the Church. But they haue not so much as the title of a calling: for the whole order of the church was ouerthrowne, that they might lift vp themselves into this tyranny. But grant they doe rightly challenge the ordinarie iurisdiction, yet they ouerthrowe the holy house of God, they are to be accounted maister builders but onely in name. This doeth not alwayes fall out, that they to whom the gouernment of the Church is committed, should reiect Christ. For there were vnder the law many godly priestes, and also in the kingdome of Christ, there were pastours which laboured diligently and faithfully in building of the church: but yet because this must needs be fulfilled, it behooueth vs wisely to discern betweene them. And the holy Ghost hath purposely forewarned vs, least any man should be deceiued by a vaine title and dignity of calling.

This was the Lordes doing. Because the common capacitie of man could not conceiue how the pastours of the Church themselves should reiect the sonne of God their Prince, the Prophet calleth them backe to the secret counsell of God, which though we cannot conceiue in our vnderstanding, yet may we behold and wonder at it. Therefore we must know that here is cutte off all occasion of questioning, and expressely forbidden that no man should esteeme or measure the nature of the kingdome of Christ by the reason of the flesh. For the simplicity of it, is wonderfull, which the Prophet exhorteth vs to reuerence, for that his will was so to abase it to the capacity of our vnderstanding. Thou wilt allowe no more of the kingdome of Christ, then seemeth probable to thee: & the holy Ghost sayth that it is a mystery worthy of great admiration, because it is hid from the eyes of men. Therefore, so oft as there is mention of the beginning, restitution, state, and the whole preservation of the Church, let vs remember not to consult with our senses, but giue the honour to the power of God, and haue his secret worke in admiration. Heere also is set downe a secret opposition betweene God and men: for we are not onely commanded to embrace the wonderfull maner of gouerning the Church, because it is the worke of God, but we are also called backe from that fond estimation of men, which often darkeneth the glory of God. As if the Prophet should haue sayd, though men excell in glorious titles, yet hee doth very ouerthwartly that shall oppose them against God, whereby the deuillish wickednesse of the Papistes is confuted, which doubteth not to preferre the determination of their Church before the word of God. For whereof doth the authoritie of the word of God depend according to their opinions, but of the pleasures of men, so that there is no more authoritie left vnto God, then that which hee receiueth by the allowance of the Church. But the spirit teacheth vs farre otherwise in this place: namely, that as soone as the maiestie of God shall appeare, that all the world keepe silence.

43. Therefore say I vnto you, Christ directed his speech thus farre to the guides

guides and gouernours, but befor the people : but now he speaketh likewise to the people the selfes, and he had good cause so to doe, for that they assisted & holpe the Priests and Scribes to hinder the grace of God. The Priests were the beginners of this mischeife : but the sinnes of the people had already deserued to haue so corrupt and degenerate pastours : to bee short, the whole bodie was bent with like malice to resist God. And this is the cause why Christ pronounced the horrible vengeance of God so generally against them all. For as the priests were puffed vp with their authoritie, so the rest of the people was proud of their pretended title of adoption. Nowe Christe declareth that God is not bound vnto them, and that it shall therefore come to passe, that the honour which they made themselves vnworthy of, shall be bestowed elsewhere. And this was once spoken to them, but it is written for all our sakes, that if GOD shall chuse vs for his people, that wee become not wanton with a vaine & wicked confidence of the flesh : but let vs againe endeavour to shew our selues such children towards him as he requirith. For if he spared not the natural branches what shall become of the that are grafted in? Ro. 11. 21. The Iewes thought that the kingdome of God belonged vnto them by right of inheritance, & therefore without all care they became hardened in their sinnes. Wee against nature doe presently succede in their place, and therefore it is much lesse tyed vnto vs, except wee be rooted in true godlines. And as we ought to be afraid of this, that Christ sayth, that they shall be deprived of the kingdome of God, which shall prophane the same : for the perpetuities of the same which is heere noted, may comfort all the godly. For Christ doeth declare in these wordes, that though the wicked doe beate downe the worship of God amongst them, yet they shall not bring it to passe that the name of Christ should be abolished, and that true religion should perish : because that God (in whose hand all the endes of the earth are) will find a seat and dwelling place for his kingdome other where. This moreouer is to be learned out of this place, that the Gospell is not therefore preached, that it should lie barren and idle, but that it might fructifie.

44. *Who soeuer shall fall on this stone.* Christe doeth more fully confirme the former sentence, that hee loseth nor wanteth not any thing, by that the wicked doe reiect him, for though their obstinacy be hard as stone or yron, yet he will breake them in their owne hardnesse, and so his glory shall the more appeare in their destruction. Hee saw a wonderfull vntowardnesse in the Iewes therefore it was necessary that this vengeance shoulde in this order be seuerely pronounced against them, least they should perish in their securitye. This doctrine doth partly teache vs with a tender and flexible heart, quietly to deliuer our selues to bee tamed by Christe, partly also hee confirmeth his against the ouerthwart and furious violences of the wicked, whome hee will at the lengthe moste fearefully destroy. They are sayde to fall vpon Christe, whiche thrust at him to overthrowe him : not that they climed vpp higher then hee, but because their madnesse doeth carry them so farre forth, that they endeouour to pull Christe downe from on high. But hee declareth that they onely preuaile in this, that in this conflict they themselves shall be broken in pieces. But whereas they shall lift vp the selues so proudly, he telleth the before, that they shall bring an other thing to passe : namely, that they shall be ground

to pieces vnder that stone, against the which they haue so boldly thrust.

45. They perceiued that he spake of them. The Euangelistes do declare how little Christ profited among the, least we should meruaile because the doctrine of the Gospell doeth not winne all men at this day to obey it. Let vs also learne that it cannot otherwife be, but that threats shuld make the wicked more & more mad. For as god sealeth his word in our heartes, so he also woundeth wicked consciences with his hot yron. Whereby it cometh to passe that vngodlinesse doth the more burne out & shew it selfe. Therefore we must pray vnto him to bring vs to a willing feare, least the naked feare of his vengeance shuld more exasperate vs. That the only feare of the people restraineth the, that they lay not handes vpon christ, let vs know that it was because God had bridleed them. Whereby no small comfort doth also come to the faithfull, when they heare that they are shielded by the hand of God, so that they escape as it were the iawes of death.

Matth. 22.

Marke. 12.

Luke 20.

15. Then went the Pharises & tooke counsell howe they might snagle him in talke.

16. And they sent vnto him their disciples with the Herodians, saying: Maister, we know that thou art true, and teachest the way of God truly, neyther carest for any man: for thou considerest not the personne of men.

17. Tell vs therefore how thinkest thou? is it lawfull to giue tribute vnto Cesar or not?

18. But Iesus perceiued their wickednesse, & said: why tempt ye me, ye hypocrites?

19. Shew mee the tribute monney: & they brought him a penny.

20. And he said vnto the: whose is this image or superscription?

21. They said vnto him: Casars. Then sayde he vnto them: Giue therefore to Cesar, the thinges which are Casars, & giue vnto god, those thinges which are gods.

22. And when they heard it, they meruailed, and left him, and went their way.

13. And they sent vnto him certaine of the Pharises, & of the Herodians, that they might take him in his talke.

14. And whē they came, they said vnto him: Maister, we know that thou art true, and carest for no man: for thou considerest not the person of men, but teachest the way of God truly. Is it lawfull to giue tribute to Cesar or no?

15. Shoulde we giue it, or shoulde wee not giue it? But he knew their hypocrisie, & said vnto them. why tempt ye mee? bring mee a penny, that I may see it.

16. So they brought it, and he sayde vnto them: whose is this image and superscription? and they said vnto him, Casars.

17. Then Iesus answered, & said vnto them: giue to Cesar, the thinges that are Casars, and to God, those that are Gods: and they meruailed at him.

20. And they watched him, & sent forth spies, which shuld saigne theselues iustly, to take him in his talke & to deliuer him vnto the power and authority of the gouernour.

21. And they asked him, saying. maister we know that thou sayest, & teachest right, neither dost thou accept mans person, but teachest the way of God truly. 22. Is it lawfull for vs to giue Cesar tribute or not?

23. But he perceiued their craftines, & said vnto the: why tempt ye me?

14. Shew me a penny, whose image and superscription hath it? They answered & said, Casars. 25. Then hee said vnto them: Giue then vnto Cesar, the thinges which are Casars, and to God those which are Gods.

26. And they could not reprove his saying before the people: but they meruailed at his answer, and held their peace.

When the Pharises had tryed all other wayes against Christ, at the last they thought this the best way to destroy him, if they could deliuer him to the

gouernor as a seditious person, and one that sought after innouations. There was about that time a great question amongst the Iewes concerning tribute (as we haue sene other wher.) for when as the Romanes had translated to themselves the tribute, which God in the law of Moses commanded to be paid to himselfe, the Iewes in all places were offended, & thought it a hainous offence and not to be borne, that prophane men shoulde pull in this maner to themselves, that which of right appertained to God. Further, when as that paying of tribute appoynted by the law, was witnes of their adoption, they thought themselves spoiled of the honour due to them. Now, the poorer any man was, the bolder he was, in hope of his pouerty, to raise stirres and tumults. Therefore the Pharisees do deuise this subtilty to catch Christin, so that he should ensnare himself, which way fouer he shuld answer, If he shuld deny to pay it he shuld be guilty of seditiō. But if he shuld grant that it shuld be paid of right, he shuld be accounted as an enemy to his owne nation, & a betrayer of the liberty of their country. But this was their speciall purpose, to alienate the people from him. This is the catching which the Euangelistes doe note: for they thinke that they haue to laide a snare on euery side for Christ that now he could not escape, But because they were his professed enemies, & knew that they were therefore suspected, they suborned some of theys owne disciples as Mat. reporteth But Luke calleth them spies, or deceitful persons, which shuld faine themselves to be righteous, that is they shuld pretend a simple & honest desire to learne. For this faining to be righteous, is not generally taken, but is restrained to this present cause: for they shuld not haue bin admitted, but vnder pretence of a sincere affection & desire to learn: they ioyned Herodians to the who had a greater fauor to the Roman Empire, wherby they were the apter to lay an accusation to his charge. But it is woorth the labour to note, how they being at sharpe dissention amongst themselves, could yet agree together to destroy Christ so great was their hatred against him, Wee haue shewed other where what maner of sect this was. For when as Herode was but halfe Iew, or a degenerat and adulterous professour of the law, whosoever would kepe the lawe exactly in euery poynt condemned him and his prophane kinde of worshipping: and he had the flatterers, which would set a colour vpon his corrupt doctrine. So besides other sectes, there was also sprung vp at that time a courtly religion.

16. *Maister, wee knowe.* This is that righteousness which they dissemble, while they doe flatteringly crouch vnto Christe, as if they were desirous to learne, and they doe not only pretend to be godly, but seeme also to be well perswaded of his doctrine. For if they had spoken from their heart, this had bin sincere dealing. So by their words there may be a definition gathered of a true & faithfull teacher, such as they faigne Christ to be. They say that he is true, & teacheth the way of God: that is, he that is a faithfull interpreter of god, and that in truth, that is without any corruption. The way of God is opposed against inuentions of men, and all forraigne and straunge doctrines: and truth is set against ambition, couetousnesse, and other wicked affections, which doe vsually corrupt the pure manner of teaching. Therefore we must account him for a lawfull teacher, which bringeth not in the deuices of menne, nor departeth from the pure woorde of GOD, but deliuereth as it were by hande, that

that which he hath learned from his mouth : further, with a sincere minde to doe good hee applyeth the doctrine to the benefite and saluation of the people, and corrupteth it not with any corruption. As concerning this last clause, Paul, 2. Cor. 2. 17. in saying that he hath not made merchandise of the word of God, declareth that there are some, which are very expert: for they will not openly ouerthrow true doctrine, neither are they notorious for wicked doctrine : yet they will defile and corrupt the purity of doctrine : because they are either ambitious, or couetous, or chaungable hether and thether after the desire of the flesh. Therefore hee compareth them to vintners or mixers, because they corrupt the sincere vse of the worde of God. That also is worthy to bee noted, which these hypocrites doe adde withall, that Christe taught truely, because hee regarded not the persons of menn. For there is nothing that withdraweth teachers more from faithfull and pure dispensing, then the hauing of respect vnto menne. For it is impossible that any manne should serue GOD truely, which desireth to please menne, Gala. 1. 10. Menne must bee regarded: but not so as that wee should curry fauour with them by flattering them. To bee short, that wee may be sincere, it is necessary that wee auoide accepti- on of persons: for it darkeneth the light, & peruerteth iust iudgement, as God doeth often commande in the lawe, Deuteronomy, 1. 16. 17. and 16. 19, & experience doth also declare the same. Therefore Christ in Iohn, 7. 24. com- pareth together iudgement according to the appearance, and righteous iudge- ment, as things one contrary to the other.

18. *Iesus perceived their wickednesse.* They vsed their wordes so, as if they differed nothing from the sincerest disciples. Therefore how coule Christe know this, but because his spirite was the searcher of heartes? For mens con- iecture coule not smell out their subtilty, but because that hee was God, hee pierced into their heartes, so that their flatteries and fained holinesse was but a vaine couer for them. Therefore before he gaue any answere, hee shewed his deity in reuealing their secret malice. Nowe sith the wicked doe daily lay the like snares for vs, and their inwarde malice lyeth hidde from vs, wee must pray that Christe woulde giue vs the spirite of discretion, and that hee woulde bestow that as a free gift vpon vs, which he had by nature and of his own right. Further, how necessary it is that we should haue this wisdome, it appeareth by this, that if wee take not heede of the snares of the wicked, wee shall make the doctrine of God subiect to their slaunders. Also that commandement of Christ that they should shew their mony, though it seemeth at the first to be of no mo- ment: yet it is sufficient to breake their snares, and to ouerthrow their deuises. For therein he gaue them a plaine graunt of obedience, so that Christe needed not to command them any new thing: The image of Caesar was vpon the mo- ney. Therefore the authoritie of the government of the Romaines was com- monly allowed. Wherefore it appeared that the Iewes had now of their owne accorde layde that law of paying tribute vpon themselves: for they had graun- ted the power of the sworde vnto the Romaines. For they coule not dispute of tribute alone: but this question dependeth of the whole government of the common wealth.

21. *Giue vnto Caesar, the things which are Caesars.* Christ declareth that there

is no question to be made of that matter, when as the money declared the subiection of their nation: as if he should haue sayde, if you thinke it absurd to pay tribute, be not subiect to the Romane empyre. But the money (which is a pledge of mutuall fellowshippe and dealing betweene men) declareth that Caesar reigneth ouer you, and your owne secrete allowaunce declareth that the lyberty which you pretend, is lost and taken away. And Christes aunswere is not so indifferent, but that it deliuereth the whole doctrine of the question proposed. For here is a plaine difference put betweene the spirituall and politike gouernment, which teacheth vs that the outward obedience hindereth vs not, but that wee may with a free conscience serue God. For the purpose of Christe was to confute their errour, which thought that they could not be the people of God except they were set free from the yoke of all humane authoritie. As Paule also doth diligently apply himselfe in this matter leaste they should thinke that they could not serue God alone, if they should obey the lawes of men, if they should pay tributes, and should submit their neckes to beare other burdens. In summe hee declareth that the lawe of God is not broken, nor his worshippe hindered by the obedience of the Iewes to the outward polytike gouernment the Romanes,

He seemeth also to reprove theyr hypocrisie for that they carelesly suffred the worship of God to be defiled many wayes: nay, they defrauded God wickedly of his power, and pretended onely this great zeale in a matter of nothing, as if he should haue sayde: you are very careful least God should lose any of his honour if you should pay tribute to the Romans. But you should rather apply your selue to yelde that worshippe to God, that he requireth of you, and also to giue vnto men that which belongeth to them. This seemeth not to be a fitt diuision, for to speake properly, when we doe our duety to men, we doe thereby yelde obedience to GOD. But Christe framing his speech to the capacite of menne, thought it sufficient to distinguish the spirituall kingdom of God from the politike order and state of this present life. Wherefore this difference must alwaies be remiembred, when the Lorde wil be the onely lawgiuer for the gouernment of the soules, the rule and order for worshipping him must be fetched out of his word and wee must onely rest in that sincere worshippe, which is there described: and the power of the sword and the lawes and iudgments are no hynderaunce but that the worshipp of God may remaye perfect amongst vs. Now this doctrine reacheth farther, so that euery man according to this calling may discharge his duety to menne, the children to the parentes, the seruantes may submitte them selues willingly to their maisters: other may be duetifull and obedient to others, according to the lawe of charitie, so that God may alwayes haue the chiefe gouernment in respect of the which let whatsoeuer is due vnto men be brought vnder, or holden as in a second degree, as menne saye. The meaning therefore is sith that whosoever doe weaken the politike estate, are rebelles against GOD the obedience towardes Princes and Magistrates must alwayes be ioyned with the worshippe and feare of God: but againe, if Princes doe challenge any thing to themselves, which belongeth to God they are to be obeyed no further, then we maye with a good conscience.

22. They maruailed. Heerealso it appeareth how God turneth the wicked endeouours of his enemies to a contrary end : & he doth not onely delude their hope and make it frustrate, but also driueth them away with shame.

So ner time it shall fall out that though the wicked be ouercome, yet they will not cease to murmur : but though their frowardnesse will not be tamed, how many battailes soeuer they doe make against the word of God, so many victories are in hand, that hee may triumph ouer them and their head Satan. But in this answere the speciall purpose of Christ was to set forth his owne glory, while he compelleth them to depart with shame.

Math. 22.

Marke 12.

Luke. 20.

23. The same day the Sadduces came to him, (which say, there is no resurrection, and asked him

24. saying, master Moses said, if a man dye hauing no children, let his brother marry his wife & raise vp seede vnto his brother

25. Now there were with vs seuen brethren, and the first married a wife, and deceased: and hauing no issue, left his wife vnto his brother.

26. Likewise also the second, and the thirde, vnto the seauenth.

27. And last of all the woman died also.

28. Therefore in the resurrection, whose wife shal shee be of the seuen? for all had her.

29. Then Iesus answered & said vnto them, ye are deceived, not knowing the scripture, nor the power of God.

30. For in the resurrection they neither marrye wiues, nor wiues are bestowed in mariage, but are as the Angels of God in heauen.

31. And concerning the resurrection

18. Then came the Sadduces vnto him, (which saye there is no resurrection) and they asked him, saying

19. Maister, Moses wrote vnto vs, if any mans brother die, and leaue his wife and leaue no children that his brother should take his wife, and raise vp seed vnto his brother.

20. There were seuen brethren, and the first tooke a wife, and when hee dyed left no issue.

21. Then the second tooke her, and hee died, neyther did he yet leaue issue, and the third likewise.

22. So seuen hadde her, and left no issue: last of all the wife died also.

23. In the resurrection then, when they shall rise againe, whose wife shall she be of them? for seuen had her to wife.

24. Then Iesus answered and saide vnto them, are ye not therefore deceived, because ye know not the scriptures, neither the power of God?

25. For when they shall rise

again

27. Then came to him certaine of the Sadduces (which deny that there is any resurrection) and they asked him.

28. Saying Maister, Moses wrote vnto vs, if any mans brother dye, hauing a wife, and hee die without children, that his brother should take his wife, and raise vp seede vnto his brother.

29. Now there were seuen brethren, and the first took a wife and he died without children.

30. And the second tooke the wife, and he died childlesse.

31. Then the third tooke her: and so likewise the seuen died, & left no children.

32. And last of all the woman died also.

33. Therefore at the resurrection whose wife of them shall she bee? for seuen hadde her to wife.

34. Then Iesus answered and sayde vnto them, the children of this world marry wiues, and are married.

35. But they which shall be counted worthy to enioy that world & the resurrection from the dead neither marrye wiues, neither are married.

36. For

<p>rection of the dead, haue ye not read what is spo- ken vnto you of God say- ing.</p> <p>32. I am the God of A- braham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Ia- cob? God is not the God of the dead, but of the liuing.</p> <p>33. And when the peo- ple heard it, they were astonied at his doctrine.</p>	<p>again from the dead, neither men mary, nor wiues are married, but are as the angels, which are in heauen.</p> <p>26. And as touching the dead, that they shal rise againe, haue ye not read in the booke of Mo- ses how in the bush God spake vnto him, saying I am the God of Abra- ham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Iacob.</p> <p>27. He is not the God of the dead, but of the liuing: ye are therefore greatly deceived.</p>	<p>36. For they can dye no more, for asmuch as they are equall vnto the Angels, and are the sonnes of God, since they are the children of the re- surrection.</p> <p>37. And that the dead shall rise againe, euen Moses shewed us be- sides the bush, when hee sayde, the Lord is the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the GOD of Ia- cob.</p> <p>38. For hee is not the God of the dead, but of them which liue: for all liue vnto him.</p> <p>39. Then certaine of the Pharisees, answered, and sayde Master, thou hast well sayde.</p> <p>40. And after that, durst they not aske him any thing at all.</p>
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Heere wee see how Sathan gathered all the wicked together, to ouerthrowe the truth of God, which men in other things could not agree amongst them- selues. For though there was great dissention betweene these two sectes, yet they conspire together against Christ: so that the Pharisees were not displeased that their doctrine was oppugned in the person of Christe. So at this day wee see all the bandes of Satan, though otherwise some of them are against others, yet they rise from all places against Christ. And the Papistes do beare so great hatred against the Gospell, that they doe gladly nourish Epicures, Libertines, and such other monsters, so that they haue their helpe to ouerthrow the Gospel. In summe wee see that they came out of diuers sortes to assault Christ: and this came so to passe, because that all men generally hated the light of sound doctrine. But the Saduces moue the question to Christ, so as vnder the colour of an ab- surditie, they might eyther drawe him into an errour, or if he should dissent, they might dyffame him, and bring him into contempt amongst the rude and vnlearned multitude. And it may be that they were wont to trouble the Pharisees before with the same obiection, but now they lay the same snare for Christ.

23. Which say that there is no resurrection. I haue shewed before of the beginning of the Saduces. They did not onely deny the last resurrection of the flesh, but also the immortallitye of the soule, as Luke declareth, A& 19. 8. And truly if the doctrine of the scripture bee well considered, with out the hope of the resurrection the life of the soule shall seeme to bee a very dreame. For GOD doth not say that the soules doe so liue after death, as if they woulde now enioy the present glory and blessednesse: but hee spendeth theyr hope vnto the latter day, I graunt that the Phylosophers, which

which were ignorant of the resurrection of the flesh, spake many things of the immortall essence of the soule : but they spake so fondly of the estate of the life to come, that their writings are to no purpose. But sith the scripture saith, that the spirituall life dependeth of the hope of the resurrection, and that the soules separated from the bodies haue respecte to that, whosoever denyeth the resurrection, doth also deny the immortality of soules. But here is to bee seene the horrible confusion of the Iewish Church, that the chiefe maisters of their religion tooke away the hope of the life to come: so that after death there should be no difference betwene men and beastes. They did not deny a holy and a righteous life, neither were they so prophane as to account the worshipp of God a needlesse matter, (but they rather acknowledged God to bee the iudge of the world, & that all things appertaining to man are gouerned by his prouidence:) but sith they tyed aswell the reward of the godly, as the paynes due to the wicked, to this present life, though they had sayde truely, that euery manne is now handled equally, according to his desert: yet this was too preposterous, to shut vp the promises of God into so narrow corners.

Nowe experience doeth evidently declare, that their folly was too grosse, sith it is euident that the reward which is layde vpp for the good, is deferred to an other life, and the punishments are not poured vppon the wicked in this worlde. To be short, there cannot bee imagined any thing more absurd then this fantasie, that menne created after the image of God, shoulde perish like beastes. But howe vile and monstrous a matter was this, when as some opinion at the least of the life to come remained euery where amongst the prophane and blinde Idolaters of the Gentiles, that this seede of godlinesse shoulde bee abolished amongst the Iewes the peculiar people of GOD. What shoulde I say, that when they sawe the holy Fathers, that they made hast to the heauenly life, and the couenaunte which God made with them is spirituall and eternall, must they not bee more blinde then blockes, which could not see in so cleare a light? But first this was a iust rewarde for them, which had rente the Church of God into sectes: then God in this maner reuenged the wicked contempt of his doctrine.

24. *Maister, Moses sayde.* Sith it might haue sufficed to haue proposed the matter simply, to what ende made they such a preface? namely, they doe craftily pretend Moses name, to proue those mariages lawfull, which were made not after the pleasure of menne, but by the commaundement and ordinance of God him selfe: also it is necessary that God him selfe should agree with himselfe. This therefore was their snare, if God will in time to come gather the faithfull into his kingdome, then will hee restore vnto them that which hee had giuen them in the worlde: therefore what shall become of that woman, whom God hadde giuen to seuen menne? So all the godlesse and Heretikes do frame their cauils, wherewith they could deforme the true doctrine of godlinesse, and make the seruantes of Christ ashamed: yea the Papistes indeuouring to entrappe vs as fast all shame, doe openly scorne at God and his word. Therefore it is not without cause that Paule, Tit. 1. 9. woulde haue the doctor furnished with weapons, wherewith hee may driue backe the ennemies to the truth. As concerning this lawe, wherein God commaundeth the next kinsmen

in blood to succcede the dead in marriage, if the first should die without childre this was the reason, that the woman which was married into any family should receiue seede thereof. This must not be vnderstoode of naturall brethren, but of colines and suchlike: for it were incest to marry within the degrees forbidden by the law.

29. *Ye are deceived, not knowing the Scriptures.* Though Christ speaketh to the Saduces, yet this reproofe doth generally belong to all deuisers of false doctrines.

For sith God doth plainly shew himselfe vnto vs in the Scriptures, the ignorance of them is the fountaine and cause of all errors. But this is no small comfort to the godly, that they shalbe safe and out of the daunger of error: so long as with an humble and modest desire to learne they shall seeke in the scriptures what is right and true.

Christes ioyning the power of God with his word, is to be referred to the circumstance of this present matter: because the resurrection far exceedeth the capacitie of mans vnderstanding it wil be incredible vnto vs, vntill our minds behold the great power of God, which is able to subdue all thinges to himselfe as Paule teacheth, Phylippians. 3. 11. Further it was necessary that the Saduces should be deceived, because they did falsly measure the glory of the heauenly life with the present estate. Yet, in the meane season doe we teach that they doe iudge and speake rightly and wysely of the mysteries of the kingdome of heauen, which doe ioyn the power of God together with the scriptures.

30. *They are as the Angelles of God.* Hee meaneth not that the children of GOD shall bee when they are risen, in all thinges like vnto the Angelles, but so farre as they shall bee free from all infirmitie of this present life: as if hee should say, that they were no more subiect to the thinges which this transitory and corrupt life hath neede of. Luke doeth more plainly set forth the reason of the similitude, because they could not die againe: therefore they should not bring forth their truite, as vpon earth. And hee speaketh of the faithfull onely, because there was no question of the reprobate. But it is demaunded why hee sayeth, that they shall then bee the sonnes of God, because they shall bee the children of the resurrection, sith the Lord doth vouchsafe this honour to his faithfull ones, though they be shutte vppe in the prison of the fraile body. And how should wee bee the heires of eternall life, if God should not acknowledge vs now for children?

I answer, after wee are grafted into the body of Christe by fayth, God adopteth vs for children, and the spirit is a witnelle, seale, marke and pledge of this adoption, so that in the hope hereof wee may freely cry, Abba, Father, Rom. 8. 15. Gal. 4. 6. But though wee know that wee are the sonnes of God, yet because it doth not yet appeare what wee shall be, vntill we shall bee transformed, and see him in his glory, as he is, we are not in effect accounted as sons. And though we be regenerate by the spirit of God, yet because our life is hidde as yet, the manifestation of the same shall make a true and perfecte difference betwene vs and straungers. In this sence is our adoption deserued by Paul to the Rom. 8. 13. to the last day,

L V. 37. *And that the dead shall rise againe.* After Christe hadde confessed that absurdity obiected against him, now hee confirmeth the doctrine of the

the last resurrection by the testimonie of the Scripture. And wee must keepe this order, that the enemies of the truth hauing their quarrels answered, may vnderstand that they strine against the word of God. For vntill they bee ouercome by the testimonie of the scripture, they may alwayes murmure and grudge Christ citeth a place out of Moses, because he had to do with the Saduces, who gaue but small credit to the Prophetes, at the most they accounted no better of them, then wee doe of the booke of Ecclesiasticus, or the hystory of the Machabes. Also seeing they alleadged Moses, hee had rather turne him backe againe vpon them, then to obiekt any one of the Prophetes. Further, hee had not this purpose, to gather all the places of scripture that serued for this purpose: as wee see the Apostles in like maner did not alwaies vse al the testimonies that serued for the same matter. Yet Christ did not vnadvisedly make choyse of this place before the rest: but chose it with great iudgement (though at the first sight it seemeth to be hard:) because the Iewes should especially account of that, and remember it: with it declareth that the Lord did therefore redeeme them because they were the children of Abraham.

God sayeth that he came thither to helpe the afflicted people: but hee addeth withall, that he acknowledged that people for his, in respect of the adoption, and for the couenant made with Abraham. Howe commeth it to passe that God should haue regard rather of the dead, then of them which liue: but because he gaue the greatest honour to the fathers, with whom hee had made his couenant? But howe should they bee so excellent and honourable, if they were dead? This relation doth euidently set forth this matter also. For as there can bee no father without children, nor a king without a people: so the Lorde cannot properly bee called God but of the liuing. Christe doeth not reason so much of the common maner and phrase of speache, as of the promise which is included in these wordes. For he doth offer himselfe of this condition to bee our God, that hee might haue vs againe to bee his people: which one thing is sufficient to strengthen the hope of the full and perfect blessednes. Hence came that saying of the Church set downe by the Prophet, Haba. 1. 12. Thou art our God of old, wee shall not dye. Therefore when he promiseth to saue all them whose God he sayth he is: and this being spoken of Abraham, Isaac and Iacob after their death, it followeth that there remaineth hope of life cuen for the dead. If any man obiekt that the soules may liue, though the bodies rise not againe: I answered a litle beefore, that these two are ioyned together: because the soules beeing not yet in their estate, doe aspyre to the inheritaunce layd vp for them.

38. *For all liue vntohim.* This manner of speach is diuersly vsed in the Scriptures: but Christe heere meaneth, that the faithfull doe liue in heauen with God after they passe out of the world: as Paul to the Roma. 6. 10. sayth, that Christ after hee was receyued into the heauenly glory, liueth to God: because hee is exempted from the infirmities & troubles of this transitory life. But Christ doeth purposely declare heere, that wee must not iudge of the life of the godly after the sense of the flesh and bloud: because it is hidden in the secrete custody of God.

For if they be almost like vnto the dead, while they wander in the world, much lesse doth there appeare token of life in them, after the death of the body. But God is faithfull, so that beyond the capacitie of men hee will keepe them aloue before him.

29. Then certaine of the Pharisees answered. It is euident that they were all maliciously bent, but by the power of God was this confession wrested out of some of the Pharisees. Though they wished that Christe might haue bene ouercome, and haue bene put to silence with shame: yet because they saw themselves armed by his answer against the contrary faction, ambitio causeth them to triumph at the victory gotten. It may bee also that for enuy they would not haue Christ ouercome by the Saduces. But by Gods wonderfull prouidence it commeth to passe, that euen his greatest enemies should subscribe to his doctrine. Their boldnes also was bridled, not onely because they saw Christ prepared to withstand all their assaults: but because they feared they shoulde haue the foyle with shame, as they had oft receiued before. Further, because they were ashamed, by silence they granted him the victory: so that his credit increased so much the more amongst the people. And in Mathewes words that they wondered all at his doctrine, it is to bee noted, that the doctrine of godlines was at that time corrupted with so many corrupt & colde commentaries, that it might well bee accounted as a wonder, that the doctrine of the resurrection was so readily and so aptly proued by the law.

Mat. 22.

Marke. 12.

Luke 10.

34. But when the Pharisees had heard that he hadde put the Saduces to silence, they assembled together.

35. And one of them which was an expounder of the law, asked him a question, tempting him, and saying,

36. Master, which is the great commandment of the law?

37. Iesus said to him, thou shalt loue the Lorde thy God with all thine heart, with all thy soule, and with all thy minde.

38. This is the first and the great commandment.

39 And

18. Then came one of the Scribes that had heard the disputing together, and perceiving that he had answered them wel, he asked him which is the first commandment of all?

29. Iesus answered him, first of all the commandments is, heare Israel, the Lorde our God is the onely Lord.

30. Thou shalt therefore loue the Lorde thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soule, and with all thy minde, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.

31. And the second is like that is: thou shalt loue thy neighbor as thy selfe. There is none other commandment

ment

25. Then beheld a certaine expounder of the law, stood vp, and tempted him, saying, maister, what shall I doe, to inherite eternall life.

26. And he sayde vnto him what is written in the law? how readest thou?

27. And he answered, and sayde, thou shalt loue the Lorde God with all thine heart, and with all thy soule and with all thy strength, and with all thy thought, and thy neighbour as thy selfe.

28. Then he sayd vnto him, thou hast answered right: this doe, and thou shalt liue.

29. But he willing to iustifie himselfe, said vnto Iesus, who is then my neighbor?

30. And Iesus answered and said a certaine man went downe from Ierusalem to Iericho, and fell among thorns

39. And the second is like vnto this, thou shalt loue thy neighbour as thy selfe.

40. On these two commandements hangeth the whole lawe and the Prophets.

ment greater then these.

32. Then the Scribe said vnto him, well maister, thou hast said the truthe, that there is one God, and that there is none but hee.

33. And to loue him with all the heart, and with all the vnderstanding, and with all the soule, & with all the strength, & to loue his neighbour as himselfe, is more then all burnt offerings, and sacrifices.

34. Then when Iesus saw that he answered discretely he sayd vnto him, thou art not far from the kingdom of God. And no man after that durst aske him any question.

theeues, & they robbed him of his raiment, and wounded him, and departed, leauing him halfe dead

31. And by chaunce there came down a certaine priest that same way, and when he saw him, hee passed by on the other side.

32. And likewise also a Levite when hee was come neere to the place, went and looked on him and passed by on the other side.

33. Then a certaine Samaritan, as he iourneied, came neere vnto him, and when he saw him he had compassion on him,

34. And went to him, and bound vp his woundes, and poured in oyle and wine, and put him on his owne beast & brought him to an inne, and made provision for him.

35. And on the morrow, when he departed, he tooke out two pence, & gaue to the host, & said vnto him, take care of him, and whatsoeuer thou spendest more, when I come againe, I will recompence thee.

36. Which now of these three thinkest thou, was neighbour vnto him that fel among the theeues?

37. And he sayd, he shewed mercy on him, then said Iesus to him, goe, and doethou likewise.

Though those thinges which Matthew in the 23. chapter, and Marke in the 12. doe report, haue onely something in them like to this historie, and be not one: yet I haue chosen to set it downe in this place, because that when Matthew and Marke do say, that this was the last question, wherewith the Lorde was tempted, Luke maketh no mention of that matter: And he seemeth to omit it of purpose: because that hee had reported it other where. Yet I doe not say that it is one and the same hy storie: for Luke hath some things diuers from the other two. They all agree in this, that a Scribe moued this question to tempt Christ. But hee whom Matthew and Marke doe make report of, at the length departeth well affected: for hee yeeldeth to Christes aunswere, and sheweth a token of a milde spirite apt to be taught. Note also that CHRIST likewise sayth, that he is not far from the kingdom of heauen. But Luke bringeth in an obstinate man, swelled with pride, in whome there appeareth no to-

ken of repentance. And it may be sayde without absurditie, that this question of the true righteousnesse and obseruation of the lawe and of the rule of good life was offe moued to Christ. But whether Luke reporteth this in an other place, or whether he pretermited that other question (because that former history was sufficient in respect of the doctrine) the likenesse of the doctrine seemeth to require, that I should confer the three Euangelists together.

Now it must bee considered what occasion moued this Scribe to aske this question of Christ: which was because he was an interpreter of the law and was offended at the doctrine of the Gospel, because he thought that the authority of Moses was thereby diminished. But he did it not so much of zeale to the law, as that hee tooke it distainefully, that his maister should lose any honour. Therefore he demandeth of Christ whether he should profess any thing more perfecte then the law. For though he uttereth not this in words, yet his captious question tendeth to this to bring Christ to be hated of the people. Further Mathew and Marke doe not attribute this subtiltie to one man onely, but they doe teach that the matter was done by agreement: and that one was chosen out of the whole company, who seemed to excell the reste in witte and learning.

Luke also doth somewhat differ from Mathewe and Marke in the maner of mouing the question. For the Scribe demandeth what men should do to attain eternall life: and in the other two, what is the greatest commaundement in the law. Yet it is too nee cle: for hee faulteth Christ subtilly, so that if hee could draw any thing out of his mouth that differed from the lawe, he might shake him vp as an Apostata, and an author of wicked backsliding.

L. V. 26. *What is written in the law?* He heareth another maner of aunswere of Christ, then he looked for. And Christe shewed no other rule of a holy & righteous life, then that which was deliuered in the law of Moses: because that the chiefe perfection of righteousnesse is containd vnder the perfect loue of God, and of our neighbour. Yet it muste be noted that Christ spake here of the meanes to obtaine saluation, according to the question that was moued to him. For he doth not plainlie teach as he doth other where, how men should come to eternall lyfe: but how they shoulde liue, that they might be accounted righteous before God. It is euident that the law teacheth men how they should frame theyr lyfe, to purchase their owne saluation before God. But that the lawe can do nothing but condemne, and is therefore called the doctrine of death, and is said to encrease transgressions (Rom. 7. 13.) the faulte is not in the doctrine but in vs, because it is impossible for vs to performe that which hee commaundeth. Therefore though no manne is iustified by the lawe: yet the lawe it selfe containeth the chiefe righteousnesse: for it doth not deceitfully promise saluation to them that follow the same, if any man doth fullye obserue whatsoeuer it commaundeth. Neither shoulde this manner of teaching seeme absurd to vs, that God shoulde first require a righteousnes of workes, and shoulde after offer it freelye with our good workes: because it is necessarye for menne to acknowledge their owne iust damnation, that they might bee driuen to flye to the mercy of God. Therefore Paule doth compare both the righteousneses together (Rom. 10. 5.) that wee might know that God iustificeth vs freelye, be-
cause

cause we haue no righteousness of our owne. But christ applyed himselfe in this answer to the Lawyer, and had respect to the maner of the question moued. For hee demanded not whence they should seeke their saluation, but by what workes it should be attained.

M A T. 38. *Thou shalt loue the Lord.* Marke setteth downe a preface, and saith that the God of Israel is the onely Lord. In which words God would set forth the authority of the law two wayes. For this should bee both a sharpe spur to stirre vs vp to the worship of God, while we are certainly perswaded that we worshippinge the true maker of heauen and earth, for doubting doth naturally make vs slouthfull, and it doeth sweetly allure vs to loue him, because that he adopteth vs of his free grace to bee his people. Therefore least the Iewes should be afraid (as it commonly vseth to be in things that are doubtfull) they heare that the true and onely God prescribeth them this rule for them to liue by. And least that distrust should draw them backe, God commeth to them familiarly, and commendeth his free couenant vnto them. Yet notwithstanding it is not to bee doubted, but that God would make himselfe knowne from all Idollers, least the Iewes should bee drawne away, but should keepe themselves in the true worshippe of him alone. But now if no vncertaintie canne hinder the miserable Idolaters from following their loue with a madde heate, what excuse shall the hearers of the law haue, if they become slouthful, when God hath reuealed himselfe vnto them? That then which followeth is a brieue summe of the law, which Moses also setteth downe. For when as the law was deuised into Tables, of the which the first commandeth the worshippe of God, the second charity, Moses gathered this summe well and wisely, that the Iewes might know what God required in euery of the commandementes. But though it is meete that God should be beloued farre otherwise then menne: yet it is not without cause that for worship or honour God should require vs to loue him: for by this meanes he declareth that no other worshippe pleaseth him, then that which is done of a free will. For he will yeelde himselfe to a right and true obedience of God, that loueth him.

Furthermore, because the wicked and corrupt affections of the fleshe doe withdraw vs from a right course, Moses declareth that our life shall then bee well brought into order, when the loue of God shall possesse all our senses. Let vs therefore learne that the loue of God is the beginning of godlines: for God refuseth all obedience of men, which commeth of contrainte, and will be worshipped willingly and freely. Yet lette vs learne that vnder the loue of God is noted the reuerence which is due vnto him. Moses addeth not the minde, but onely maketh mention of the hearte, the soule and the strength. And though this partition into these foure partes is the fuller, yet it altereth not the sense. For when Moses would summarily declare that GOD should be beloued perfectly, and that what power soeuer is in men, should be employed this way, it was sufficient for him to adde strength to the soule and hearte, and so to leaue no parte of vs voyde or without the loue of God. Also we knowe that the Hebrewes doe sometime note the minde by the word *heart*, especially where it is ioyned with this word soule. But I do not labour much to shew what

the minde doth differ from the heart aswell in this place, as in that of Matthew, except that it signifieth a higher seate of reason, from whence all counsellies & thoughtes doe proceede. But by this short summe it appeareth that God in giuing the lawe and commaundementes respecteth not what men can doe, but what they shoulde doe. For it cannot be that the perfect loue of God should raigne and rule in this infirmitie of the flesh. For wee know how all the senses of our minde are bent to vanitie. Lastly we doe gather hereby that God doeth not stay vpon the outwarde shew of workes, but doth especially require the inward affection, that good fruits may grow of a good roote.

39. *The second is like to this.* He placeth loue and charity amongst menne in the second place, because the worshippe of God is first in order. And hee saith that the commaundement of louing the neighbours is like to the first: because it dependeth of it. For first euery man is giuen to selfe loue, true charitie towardes our neighbours cannot be founde, any where, but where the loue of god raigneth. For the loue wherwith the children of the world do loue one another is to be bought and solde: for euery man careth for his owne profit. Againe, it is impossible that the loue of God should raigne, but that brotherly loue amongst men should spring out of it.

Also, when Moses commaundeth vs to loue our neighbours as our selues, he woulde not set the loue of our selues first, that euery man might loue himselfe first, and then his neighbours (as the Sorbonicall Sophisters doe cauill, that the ruled are inferiour to his rule) but sith we are giuen too much to our selues, Moses reproouing this faulte, sette our neighbours in equall degree with vs: as if he shoulde forbid euery man neglecting others, to haue a care of himselfe: because that charity ioyneth all into one body. And correcting selfe loue, which deuideth men asunder, he bringeth them all backe to a common societie, and as it were to a mutuall embracing one of another. Whereby we gather that Paule doth not without cause call it the band of perfection, Coloss. 3. 14. and the fulfilling of the law, Romans, 13. 10. Because that all the commaundements of the second Table should be referred to it.

L V. 28. *Doethis, and thou shalt liue.* I haue shewed somewhat before howe this promise agreeth with the free iustification by faith. For God doth not therefore iustifie vs freely by grace: because the law doth not shew and describe a perfecte righteousness, but because that wee faile in the obseruation of the same: and therefore hee sayeth, that wee cannot liue by the same, because it is weake in our flesh. So that these two doe agree well together: the lawe teacheth how menne shall bee iustified by workes, and that no manne shall be iustified by workes, because the want is not in the doctrine of the lawe but in menne. Yet was it Christes purpose to take away that obiection: because hee knewe that the rude and vnlearned people murmured against him, as if that he should goe about to ouerthrow the lawe, as it is the perpetuall rule of righteousness.

29. *But hee willing to iustifie himselfe.* This question might seeme to serue nothing to the iustifying of manne. But if wee remember that which is sayde other where, that mens hypocrisie is most sound out in the second table) for where

while they saigne themselves to be great seruers of God, they doe openly deale vcharitably towards their neighbours) and thereby it may be easily gathered that the Pharise vsed this flift: that being covered vnder this false cloake and colour of holines, hee might not be brought forth into the light. Therefore when hee perceiueth that the examination of his charitie would make against him, least that he should be found a transgressor of the lawe hee seeketh flar-ting hoales in the name of a neighbour. And first we see that the Scribes had herein corrupted the law, because they accounted none others for their neighbours, but they which were worthy of it. And thereof was that a generall rule receiued amongst them that it was lawfull to hate their enemies. For this was one meanes that the hypocrits vsed to cleare themselves of guiltines, to draw back as much as they could least their life shuld be brought to be iudged by the law.

30. *Iesus answered.* Christ might haue taught simply that the name of a neighbour doth generally belong to euery man because that all mankind is ioyned and knitte together with a certine holy bande of fellowshippe. And surely the Lord set downe this name in the lawe for no other cause, but that he might gently allure vs to loue one another. The commaundement had bene playner thus, Loue euery man as thy selfe: but because that men are so blinded in their owne pride, that euery man lyketh so wel of himselfe, that he scarce thinketh others worthy of the lyke estate, but withdraweth their due tie from them, the Lord therefore of purpose calleth all neighbours, that the affinity it self might ioynethem together one to another. Therefore that any man may become our neighbour, it sufficeth that hee is a man, for it is not in our power to blotte out that nature common to all. But the purpose of Christ was to drawe such an answer out of the Pharisee, as that hee myght thereby condemne himselfe. For sith that this masterly determination had taken place amongst them, that no man is our neighbour, but hee which is our friend: if Christ had precisely asked him the question, at one word he would neuer haue graunted, that al men are comprehended vnder this name neighbour: which he vrgeth him to confesse by the similitude, which he bringeth forth. And the sum is, that the greatest straungers is our neighbour: because God hath so tyed all men together, that euery of them shoulde helpe others. Yet at the firste hee doth properly rebuke the Iewes and Priestes, because that when they boasted themselves to bee the Sonnes of one Father and that they were separate from all other nations by a priueledge of adoption, that they might be God his holy inheritaunce: yet they despyed and had eache other in barbarous and beastly contempt as if there were no neighbourhood betweene them. For it is not to be doubted but that Christ describeth this cruell neglect of charitie, whereof they were gultie. But, as I sayde, this is the chiefe purpose, the neighbourhood which bindeth vs to do each for other, is not tyed to friends or kinsefolkes, but to belong to all mankind.

To proue this, Christ compareth the Samaritan to the priest and the Leuit. It is very well knowne howe the Iewes hated the Samaritans with a mortall hatred: so that there was great discord euen amongst them that dwelt neere together.

Now, saith Christ: a Iewe, a citisen of Iericho, when as he journeyed to Hierusalem, being wounded of theeues, was neglected aswell by the Leuite as by the Priest, which came by him, as hee lay halfe dead: but he was lovinglye provided for by the Samaritan: and at the length hee asketh which of the three was neighbour to this Iew. This subtil Doctour could not shift awaye, but that he must prefer the Samaritan before the other two. For here may be seene, asin a glasse the fellowshipp and neighbourhood of menne which the Scribes endeouored to wipe awaye with their wicked caull. And the mercy which this enemy shewed to the Iewe, declareth by the direction and instruction of nature that manne was made for mannes sake: whereof the mutual bond of neighbourhood amongst all menne is concluded. The Allegory which the patrons of free will doe coyne out of this place is so foolish, that it needeth not be confuted, In their opinon the condition of Adam after his fall is described vnder his figure of the wounded manne. Whereof they inferre that the power to doe well was not altogether quenched in him: because it is saide onely, that he was halfe dead. As though that it shoulde be Christes purpose to speake in this place of the corruption of mannes nature, and to shewe how deadly or curable a wound Sathan gaue Adam: and as though hee sayde not plainly, and without a figure, Iohn 3.25. All menne are dead, but they whom hee maketh alieue by his voice.

The other Allegory hath no more colour in it: which yet is so much accepted as that it is receiued for an oracle almoste by all mennes allowance. They imagined this Samaritan to be Christe, because he is our keeper: they say that wine and oyle were powred into the wound because that christ healeth vs with repentance and the promise of grace. They haue forged a thyrd subtiltie, that Christ doth not restore to health presently, but committeth vs to the church as to an Inne keeper to bee healed by litle and a litle. I graunte that euery of these is very plausible: but the Scripture must be more reuerenced, then to take this libertie thus to alter the sense of the same. But it is manifest to euery man that these imaginations were deuised by curious men againste Christes minde.

M A T. 40. *In these two commaundementes.* Nowe I returne to Mathew, where Christe saith, that all the lawe and the Prophetes dependeth vpon these two commaundementes: not that he would restraints the whole doctrine of the Scripture to this: but because that whatsoeuer is commaunded any where of the rule of holy and righteous lyfe, shoulde bee referred to these two heades For Christ doth not generally declare what the lawe and the Prophetes doe containe. but in his speech hee saith nothinge else is requyred in the lawe and the Prophetes, but that euery manne shoulde loue God and his neighbour as if hee shoulde haue sayde, the summe of a godlie and vpright lyfe is. contayned and included in the worthippe of GOD and loue of menne: as Paule saith, Romanes, 13. 10. that loue is the fulfilling of the lawe. Wherefore certaine ignoraunt people doe wickedly snatch at this saying of Christe: as if that wee shoulde search no further in the lawe and the Prophetes, For as ther is a difference betweene the promises and the commaundementes: so Christe doth not generally declare in this place
what

what must bee learned out of the worde of God : but according to the circumstance of the matter he sheweth to what end all the commaundementes are directed : yet the free remission of sinnes , whereby wee are reconciled to God, the hope of calling vpon God, the marke of our inheritance to come, and all other partes of faith, though they haue the highest place of the law, do not depend vpon these two commaundementes. For it is one thing to demand that which is due, and another thing to offer, that which we want. Marke noteth the same thing in other wordes, that there is none other commaundement greater then these.

MAR. 32. *Well Maister thou hast sayd the truth.* Onely Marke maketh mention that the Scribe was humbled. And it is worthy to bee noted, that he which maliciously and deceitfully assaulted Christe, did not onely with silence giue place to the truth, but hee subscribed to Christe openly and freely. So we see that hee was not one of that sort of enemies, whose obstinacie was incurable: for though they should be ouercome a hundred times, yet they doe not cease to set themselves against the truth every way. But it is to be gathered by this answer, that Christ did not precisely comprehend the rule of life in two wordes onely: but as occasion was giuen, he entuighed against the feigned and counterfeited holinesse of the Scribes: who giuing themselves onely to outward ceremonies, made no account almost of the spirituall worshippe of God: and there was no great reckoning of charity amongst them. And though the Scribe had some such corruptions: yet, as it commeth sometimes to passe, hee had conceiued the seede of true knowledge out of the Lawe, which lay hid and smothered in heart, and by reason heereof hee yeeldeth and suffereth himselfe to be reclaimed from that corrupt course. This yet seemeth not to fall out well, that the sacrifices, which are part of the worship of God, and appertaine to the first table of the law, shoulde bee lesse esteemed then charitie towards men. The answer is, though the worshippe of God is farre more excellent and precious then all the duties of a righteous life: yet the outward exercises of them are not of themselves of that value, as to ouerthrow charitie. For wee know that charitie pleaseth God simply and of it selfe, when as he doth not regarde nor allow of sacrifices but to an other ende. Note that hee speaketh heere of naked and vaine sacrifices. for Christ doth oppose a faigned kinde of holinesse against true and sincere honestie.

The same doctrine is found also in diuerse places of the Prophets, that the hypocrits might know that the sacrifices are of no value, which are not offered in spirit and truth: for GOD is not pleased with the sacrifices of beastes, where charitie is neglected.

34. *Then, when Iesus sawe.* It is vncertaine whether this Scribe did profite anye further afterwardes or no: but beecause hee sheweth himselfe apt to bee taught, CHRIST reacheth his hand forth vnto him, and reacheth vs by his example to helpe them, in whome there appeareth some beeginning eyther of readinesse to bee taught, or of right vnderstanding. For it seemeth that Christe sayde, that this Scribe was not farre from the kingdomes of heauen for two causes: namely, because hee woulde yeelde to

his duety, & did wisely discern the outward profession of the worship of God from the necessary duties of neighbourhood. Further, Christ told him that he was not farre from the kingdome of God, not so much to prayse him, as to exhort him to goe forward, & in his person he encourageth vs all, that being once entred into the right way, we should goe the cheerefuller forward. By these wordes we are also taught, that many while they are yet in errour, doe yet with closed eyes come to the way, and are by this meanes prepared, to runne in the race of the Lorde when time shall serue. That which the Euangelistes doe say that the mouthes of the aduersaries were stopt, so that they durst not attempt Christ any more, must not so be taken, as if they ceased and left of their obstinate frowardnes. For they fretted inwardly as wilde beastes vse to doe, when they are shut vp in caues, or as fierce horses doe bite vpon the bridle. But the more they shewed themselves hard hearted, and their rebellion not to be vanquished, the more notable triumph did Christ get vpon them both.

And this his victory must not a litle incourage vs, neuer to bee amazed in defending of the trueth, being sure of the successe. It shall come oft times to passe that the enemies shall frowardly lift vp themselves euen to the end: but God wil bring it to passe at the length, that this madnesse shall fall vpon their own heads and the truth shall notwithstanding proceede with the victory.

Mat. 22.

Marke, 12.

Luke 20.

41. While the Pharisees were gathered together, Iesus asked them.

42. Saying, what thinke yee of Christ? whose sonne is hee? They sayde vnto him Dauids.

43. Hee sayd vnto them how then doth Dauid in spirit call him Lord saying.

44. The Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy foote stoole?

45. If then Dauid called him Lord, how is hee his sonne?

46. And none could answer him a word, neither durst any from that daye forth aske him anye more questions.

35. And Iesus answered and said, teaching in the Temple: how say the scribes that Christ is the sonne of Dauid?

36. For Dauid himselfe said by the holy Ghost, the Lord said to my Lord, sit at my right hand, till I make thine enemies thy foote stoole.

37. Then Dauid himselfe calleth him Lord: by what meanes is he then his sonne? And much people heard him gladly.

41. Then hee sayd vnto them, how say they that Christ is Dauids sonne?

42. And Dauid himselfe saith in the booke of the Psalmes, The Lord said vnto my Lord, sitt at my right hand.

43. Till I shall make thine enemies thy foote stoole.

44. Seeing Dauid calleth him Lord, how is he then his sonne?

42. What thinke yee of Christ? Marke and Luke doe more plainly declare, why Christ asked this questiō: namely, because the Scribes had this corrupt opinion amongst them, that the promised Redeemer should be some one of the sonnes and successours of Dauid, who shoulde not bring with him any thinge more excellent then the nature of man.

For presently euen from the begining, Sathan endeouored by all the meanes he could, to thrust in some faigned Christe, who should not be the true mediator betweene God and men. Because that God had so often promised that Christe should come of the seede or loynes of Dauid, this perswasion was so deeply settled in the hearts of all men amongst the Iewes, that they would neuer be drawn from this perswasion, to beleue that he should not haue the nature of manne. Therefore Sathan suffered them to acknowledge Christ to be very man, and the Sonne of Dauid, because hee should haue tempted in vaine, to overthrow this article of the faith: but that which was worse, he spoyle him of his Godhead, as if he should be some one of the sonnes of Adam. And by this meanes the hope of the eternall life to come, and the spirituall righteousness was abolished. But since Christ came into the world, heritikes haue endeouored by many engines or snares to overthrow sometimes his manhood, sometimes his Godhead, least that hee should haue full power to saue vs, or least that wee should haue familiar access vnto him. Further, sith that the houre of death was now at hand, the Lorde himselfe would make his Godhead known, that all the godly might without feare put their confidence in him. For if hee were only man, it were neither lawfull to glory in him, nor to hope to be saued by him. Now wee vnderstand his purpose, that he shewed himselfe to be the sonne of God, not so much for his owne sake, as that he might establish our faith on his heavenly power. For as the infirmities of the flesh, wherein hee came neare to vs, maketh vs bolde to approach neare vnto him: so if that onely should bee before our eyes, it would rather fill vs with feare and desperation, then make vs to bee of good hope. Yet it is to be noted, that the Scribes are not reprehended, because they taught that Christ should be the son of Dauid, but because they imagined Christ to bee meere manne, who should come from heauen, to take vpon him the nature and person of a man. Neither doth the Lord speake these wordes expressly of himselfe: but hee simply sheweth that the Scribes were in a wicked error, which onely looked for a redeemer from the earth, and of the progenie of man. But though it was an olde opinion amongst them, yet wee gather by *Matthew*, that they were asked before the people what they thought.

43. *Howe then doeth Dauid in spirite*. The saying of Christe that Dauid spake in spirite, is a forcible and vehement speech. For hee opposeth the Prophecie of a thing to come, to the testimony of a thing present. For by this saying hee preuenteth the caull wherewith the Iewes doe flee away at this day. They say that the kingdome of Dauid was commended with this commendation, as if that God who had appoynted him to raigne, would rise against the furious endeouors of his enemies, and he sayeth they shall preuaile nothing against the will of God. Least the Scribes should obiekt any such thinge, Christe sayeth before, that the Psalme was not made nor spoken of the person of Dauid, but was spoken by the spirite of Prophecie, describing the kingdom of Christe which was to come: so also it is easie to bee prooued out of the text, that the wordes which are read in that place, can neither agree vnto Dauid, nor vnto any other earthly kings. For Dauid in that place doeth bring in a king adorned with a newe Priesthoode, whereby it was necessary that the olde shadowes of the law should be abrogated.

Now it is to be seene how he proueth that Christ should be of greater excellency, then that he could be begotten of the seede of David only: Namely, because that David, who was the king and head of the people, called him Lorde. Whereof it followeth, that in him there was somewhat more then a man. Yet the reason seemeth to be very weake & cold: because it may bee excepted, that whē he gaue this Psalm to the people to be song, not hauing respect of his own person, he gaue Christ authority ouer others. But I do take exceptiō to the contrary, when as he was one of the members of the Church, there was nothing more vnlkely, then that hee woulde deprivē himselfe of the common doctrine. Heere hee commandeth all the children of God to reioyce as it were with one voyce, for that they should be safe vnder the defence of the heavenly and victorious king. If he should be separate from the body of the Church, he coulde not be a partaker of the saluation promised in Christ. If this were the speech of a few, the kingdome of Christ should not extend so farre as to David. But nowe neither he, nor any other, canne exempt himselfe from his subiection, but that withall hee must fall away from the hope of eternall saluation. Therefore sith a better thing could not befall vnto David, then to be comprehended within the compasse of the Church, he made this Psalm aswell for himselfe as for the rest of the people. In sum, by this title Christ is appoynted to be the chiefe & onely king, that should raigne ouer all the faithfull. Neither may there be any exception admitted, but where the redeemer is made gouernour of the Church, all mē should be brought to one order. Wherefore it is not to be doubted but that David would submit himselfe to his gouernement, that hee might be accounted amongst the people of God. But now here ariseth an other question: coulde not God haue raised vppe some man whom he might haue made the redeemer, that might haue bin Davids Lord, though he was his son: For the substantiall name of God is not heere set downe, but onely *Adonai*, which is often times giuen to men. I answer, christ taketh it for granted, who is exempted frō the number of men, & is exalted to that degree of honor, that he should be the chiefe head of the church, that he was not meere mā, but also endued with the maiesty of god, for the eternall God who challengeth this with an oath to himselfe alone, that euery knee should bow before him. Isa. 45. 23 & 43. 8. He also sweareth that he wil not giue his glory to another, Ro. 14. 11. And Paul saith, Phil. 2. 9. while christ was made king, he had a name giuen him, which is aboue euery name, that before him euery knee should bow. And though Paul had neuer spoken it, yet so it is, that Christ is therefore aboue David & all other holy kings, because that hee is also aboue angels Which could not befall to any man which is a creature, except the same were also God manifested in the flesh. I graunt that hee doth not here expressely, & in word expresse his diuine power, but it may easily bee gathered that he is God, who is placed aboue all creatures.

44. *The Lorde sayde to my Lorde*, The holy Ghost beginneth heere a triumph songe to all the godly, so that they might boldly stand against Sathan and all the wicked, and might laugh their madnesse to scorne, forasmuch as they goe about to throwe Christe out of his throne. Therefore, least they shoulde bee amazed or afrayde, when they shoulde see great stirres vpon the earth, they are commaunded to oppose the holy and inuolable decree of
God

GOD against all their endeouours to the contrary. Therefore the meaning is, though men become mad, yet what soeuer they dare attempt for the ouerthrow of the kingdome of Christ shal bee in vaine, because that it standeth not vpon the pleasure of men, but is erected by God to stand for euer. Therefore, so oft as this kingdome is violently assaulted, let vs remember this heavenly oracle for certainly this promise was laid vp in Christs hand, that euery of the faithfull might apply the same to their own profit. And God is neither variable nor deceitfull to call backe that which he hath once spoken with his mouth. The sitting also on the right hand, is metaphorically taken for the second or next degree, which Gods vicar or deputie holdeth. Wherefore it signifieth asmuch as to get great authoritie & power in the name of God: as we know that god committed these things to his onely sonne, that hee might gouerne his church by his hand. So this speache appoynteth nor any place, but rather includeth both heauen and earth vnder the dominion of Christ. And God sayth that Christe shall sit vntill his enemies be ouerthrowne, to let vs vnderstande that this kingdome cannot be vanquished nor beaten downe, nor that he should be deprived of the power that is giuen, when all his enemies are ouerthrowne: but because that he shall stand found for euer, when all his enemies are fallen. Yet the estate of the kingdome which is seene at this day must be noted, least wee shoulde be troubled, when wee see it assaulted on euery side.

Math. 21.

1. Then spake Iesus to the multitude, and to his disciples:
2. Saying, the Scribes and Pharisees sit in Moses seate.
3. All therefore, whatsoeuer they bid you obserue, that obserue and do: but after their works do not, for they saye & doe not.
4. For they binde heauy burdens, and greiuous to bee borne, and lay them on mennes shoulders, but they themselues will not moue them with one of their fingers.
5. All their workes they doe for to bee seene of men: for they make their phylacteries broad, and make long the fringes of their garments.
6. And loue the chiefe place at feasts and to haue the chiefe seats in the assemblies.
7. And greetings in the markets, and to be called of men, Rabbi, Rabbi. 8. But bee not yee called Rabbi: for one is your doctour wit christ, & al ye are brethren.
9. And call no man your father vpon the earth: for there is but one, your father which is in heauen,

10. Et

Marke. 12

38. Moreover hee sayde vnto them in his doctrine: Beware of the Scribes, which loue to go in long robes and loue salutations in the markettes.
39. And the chiefe seats in the Synagogues and the first roumes at feastes.

Luke 11.

45. Then answered one of the expounders of the law, & sayd vnto him: maister: Thus saying, thou purist vs to rebuke also.
46. And he sayd: woe bee to you also, yee interpreters of the lawe: for yee lade menne with burdens grienous to bee borne, and yee your selues touche not the burdens with one of your fingers.

A little before.

43. Woe bee to you Pharisees: for ye loue the vppermost seats in the Synagogues, and greetings in the markets.

Luke 10.

45. Then in the audience of all the people, hee sayde to his disciples:

46. Be-

10. Be not called doctours: for one is your doctour, euen Christ.

11. But he that is greatest amongst you, let him be your seruant.

12. For whosoever will exalt himselfe, shall be brought low: and whosoever will humble himselfe, shall be exalted.

47. Beware of the Scribes whiche desire to goe in long robes, & loue salutations in the markettes, and the highest seates in the Synagogues, and the chiefe, rooms at feastes.

1. Iesus spake to the multitude. This was a very profitable admonition, that amongst so many dissensions, and grudging contentions, amongst the troubled and confused estate of things, in the desolation of a right and lawfull gouernement, yet the authoritie of the word of God should remaine safe. For to this end bent the purpose of Christ, least the people being offended with the sinnes of the Scribes, should cast of all regard and reuerence of the law: For we know howe readily mens mindes are bent to loath and despise the same. Especially, where the life of the pastours is dissolute, all men commonly fall to wantonnesse after their example, as if they had a grant to doe it freely. The same also (nay somewhat worse) falleth out in dissensions: for the greater parte shaking off the yoke, powre forth their lustes, & breake forth into extreame contempt. Furthermore, at that time the Scribes were euen enflamed with couetousnesse, they swelled with ambition, their extortions were knowne, their fearefull crueltye and corruption of their liues were so great, that they seemed to haue conspired the ouerthrow of the law. Moreouer, they had peruerbed the right and naturall sense of the law, with their corrupt commentaries, so that Christ was compelled sharpely to contend with them: beause they were caried with a wonderfull madnesse to quench the light of the truth. Therefore, because it was to bee feared least that many shoulde growe into contempt of all godlines, partly by reason of such corruptions, partly beecause of tumultuous contentions, Christe meeteth with them in good time, and sayeth that it shoulde bee wickedly done, if for the corruptions of menne, true religion shoulde be beaten downe, and the lawe shoulde bee anything the lesse regarded. Sith that the Scribes were most obstinate ennemies against the truth, because they oppressed the Church with their tyranny, Christe was compelled to discouer their corruptions. For except that good and simple men had been drawne out of their bondage, the gate had beene shutte vp against the Gospell. There was also another reason: because the people thought that lawfull for them, which they sawe their rulers doe, they made a lawe vnto themselves of their corrupt liues. But least any man should wrest those things which hee shoulde speake into a diuers sense, he vseth this speech before, what maner of men soeuer the doctours be, yet it is not meete that the word of God should receiue any blot or blemish because of their filthy liues, or that they shoulde take the liberty to sinne of their wicked examples. And this wisdom must bee diligently noted. For many while they take holde of one thing, that they might bring the vngodly and the wicked into hatred and infamie, doe with an vnadvised zeale mixe and confound all things together. For all discipline is despised, shame is troden downe: to bee short, there remaineth no regard of honesty: yea many become impudent, and doe of purpose spread abroad the sinnes of the Priests, that
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they might haue the better cloake for their sinne. But Christe doeth enuey so against the Scribes, that firste hee deliuereth the lawe of God from contempt. Therefore wee must learne to vse the same wisdome, if wee desire that our reprehensions should doe any good: yet againe it is good to note, that Christ was not afraid of offending any manne: whereby he should be kept from discovering those vngodly doctours, as they had deserued. He only helde this moderation, least the word of God should growe into contempt through the wickednesse of menne. Further, to lette vs vnderstand that hee spake of the sinnes, and not to procure hatred to the persons of menne, but least that infection should spread further, Marke sayeth expressly, that he spake *in his doctrine*. By which wordes hee declareth, that he would haue the hearers profite by these admonitions, that they might take heede to themselves. And though Luke seemeth to restraine this to the disciples, yet it is probable that hee directeth his speech generally to the whole multitude. The which doth also more evidently appeare by Matthew: and the matter it selfe required that Christ should haue respect to all men in generall.

2. *They sitte in Moses seat.* It is not without consideration that I haue set that heere which Luke rehearseth in an other place. For besides that it is the same doctrine, I doubt not but that Luke after he had said that the Lord had severely & hardly reprobued the Scribes, he added also other reprehensions, which Matthew deserued to a proper place. For now we haue seene how the Euangelists haue placed diuers sayings of Christ, together, as occasion required. But because that Math. wryteth more at large, I will rather interpret that which he wryteth. The Lord in sum exhorteth the faithfull, sith the Scribes liued most wickedly, not to leade their life after their corrupt maners, but rather to frame it according to the rule of the lawe which they heare out of the mouthes of the Scribes. For it was necessary (as I touched euen now) that he should reprehend many corruptions in them, least they should infect the whole people. Therefore, least their wickednes should rubbe away the force from the doctrine whereof they were ministers and preachers, hee comandeth the faithfull to attend to their wordes, but not to their deedes: As if that he should haue said, there is no cause why the euill examples of the pastours should hinder the children of God fro liuing well. Vnder the name of the Scribes are the Doctours or the interpreters of the lawe noted, and it agreeth very well with the Hebrew phrase. And it is certaine that Luke calleth the same men lawyers. But the Lord doth especially reprove those Pharisees which were of the number of Scribes: because that at that time this secte had the chiefe place in the gouernment of the Church, and in the interpretation of the Scripture. For wee shewed other where that when the Sadduces and the Essens would be accounted learned, according to the learned, the Pharisees followed an other manner of teaching deliuered vnto them from their elders, as it were from hande to hand, so that they would search out more subtilly the mysticall sense of the Scripture. And there of they had their name giuen them: for they are called Pherulim as interpreters. And though they had filled the whole scripture with their inventions: yet because they gloried in that popular kinde, they had most authority in setting forth the worshippe of God, and the discipline of holy life. Therefore the sentence must be resolued thus:

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the Pharisees and the rest of the Scribes : or the Scribes amongst whome the Pharisees haue the greatest honor, are in their words, good maister of an vpright life : but in their vngodly deedes they teach you very ill : wherefore marke rather their mouthes then their handes. Now it is demanded whether we must obey whatsoeuer the doctours doe commaund without putting any difference. For it sufficiently appeareth that the Scribes of that age had wickedly and vngodly corrupted the law with their vngodly fantasies, and had laden the miserable soules with vnrighteous lawes, and had defiled the worship of God with many superstitions, & christ would haue their doctrine kept, as if that it were not lawfull to resist their tyranny. The answer is easie, he doth not simply compare euery doctrine with their life: But this was Christes purpose to put a difference between the holy law of god & their prophane works: for to sit in Moses chaire, is nothing els then to shew out of the law of God how they should liue. And though I do not certainly know whence this manner of speech is borrowed, yet their cōsuetude is probable which do referre it to the pulpit which Esdras set vp, whence the law was read Neh 8.4. And when the Rabbins would speake of the scripture, they of the cōpany which were to speake, rose in order. But it may bee that the custome was to read the law it selfe out of a higher place. He therefore sitteth in the chaire of Moses, which cōmandeth not of himselfe, or of his owne iudgement, but of the authoritie and word of God. Yet heere withall is noted a lawfull callinge : for Christ doth therefore command that the Scribes shuld be heard, because they were the publike teachers of the Church. The Papists which do giue lawes, thinke it inough to haue the title and the place: for to this end do they wrest Christes words, as if it were necessary for men to receiue obediently whatsoeuer the ordinary prelates of the church do cōmand. But this cauill is cōfuted againe & againe, in another cōmandement of Christes, where he willet to take heed of the leauen of the pharisees. If by the authority of christ it is not only lawfull, but also behouefull to reiect whatsoeuer the Scribes do adde of their owne to the pure doctrine of the law: it is euident that whatsoeuer they please to cōmand, may not be receiued without choise & iudgement. Furthermore, if Christ would haue tied their consciences to the precepts of men, he had spokē falsely other where, saying that god was worshipped in vain with the precepts of men. Hereby it appeareth, that christ exhorted the people & they shuld so far obey the Scribes, as they continued in the simple & pure interpretation of the law. For Aug. doth very well & aptly according to the mind of Christ, expound the sitting of the Scribes in Moses chaire, to be that they taught the law of God: & therefore the sheepe ought to heare the voyce of the shepheard by them as by men appointed to that office. To the which wordes he presently addeth, therefore God teacheth by them: but if they will teach their owne, heare the not, do not after them. In the treatise vpō Iohn 46. To the which sentence that which the same man saith in his 4. booke *de doctrina Christiana*, answereth: Because the good faithfull men do not heare all men, but they heare god himselfe obediently, therefore they are heard profitably, who also do profitably restraîne frō those things they should not do. Therefore the chaire not of the Scribes but of Moses cōpeled the to reach good things yea though they did those things which were not good. In their life they did their own works: but the chaire which was none of theirs, suffred the not to teach their own doctrines.

4. *For they binde burdens.* He accuseth not the Scribes, as if they should tyrannically oppresse the soules with hard & vnrighteous lawes: for though they had brought in many superfluous rites (as it appeareth by other places) yet christ doth not touch that fault now: for hee compareth true doctrine with a corrupt and dissolute life. Also it is no maruaile that the lawe of God is called a heauie burden, and hard to bee borne, and especially in respect of our infirmities. But though the Scribes required nothing, but that which God had commanded: yet Christ doth heere reprove their straight and austere kinde of teaching, which is common with these proud hypocrites, so that they do imperiously require of others whatsoeuer is due to God: they are not to be intreated from vrging others in their duties, and they do flatteringly spare themselves, euen in those things which they doe seuerely inioyne to others, & carelessly they giue themselves to any thing. In which sense Ezechiel reproveth them, for that they ruled with austeritie and power. For they which do earnestly feare God, though they endeavour to frame their disciples to obey him sincerely and perfectly, yet because they are seuerer, rather towards themselves then towards others, they are not so precise exactors: further, because they know their owne infirmity, they doe louingly forgiue the weak. But none can be imagined more bold or more cruel in commanding, then the blockish conteniners of God: because they care not for the difficulty of that, from the which they doe exempt themselves. Wherefore no man can orderly rule others, but hee which first hath ruled himselfe.

5. *All their workes they do.* He had said euen now that the Scribes liued farre otherwise then they taught: but now hee addeth, that if they had a shewe of any good thinge, euen that was but fained and toyish: because they had no other purpose but to please men and to glory of themselves. And heere he doth secretly oppose the disguised vicer of their workes which serue but for ostentation against the study of godlines & of a holy life. For a sincere worshipper of God will neuer giue himselfe to these vaine glorious boastings, wherewith the hypocrites are puffed vp: so he doth not onely reprove ambition in the Scribes and the Pharisees: but sith the Lord hadde condemned the transgression and contempt of the law of God in their whole life, least they should object their fained holines as a defence, hee answereth it before it be objected, that these thinges whercof they glory, are but friuolous trifles, & not to be accounted of, because there reigned nothing in the, but meere boasting. Afterward he bringeth forth one kind wherby such ambition was easily known, for that euen in the hems of their garment they would shew before the eyes of men that they were good obseruers of the law. For to what end were the borders of their garments broder, & their phylacteries exceeding the common custome of the people, but to make a vaine shewe? The Lord had commanded the Iewes to weare certaine choyce sentences, both in their forehead and vpon their garments: for because that man would easily forget the law, therefore the Lord would that his people should thus be put in minde thereof. And therefore were they also commanded to write such sentences vpon the postes of their houses, that whether soeuer they turned their eyes, they might presently haue some godly admonition. But what did the Scribes? They wore the commaundementes of GOD more gorgeously wrought vpon their garments, that they might differ from the rest of the people. And in this their glorious boasting, their filthy ambition was betrayed.

But heeraby wee doe also learne, howe wise men are, to adde their owne vaine fantasies, to the ende they might couer their owne sinnes vnder some colour & cloake of vertues: as in this, that they wrest to serue their hypocrisie, those exercises of godlinesse which God commanded. There was nothing more profitable then to exercise all the senses in meditating of the law: neither was that commaunded of the Lord in vaine. But they were so farre from profiting by such instructions, that they put a perfect righteousness in the decking of their garments, and despised the law in all their life. For the law of the Lord could not more reprochfully be derided, then when as in a stagelike habite they would faine to keepe the same, and would call to be the keepers of it persons prepared to play a comedie. That which Marke and Luke doe speake of the robes, doth tend to the same ende: for wee know that the people of the East vsed long garments euery where, which fashion they also keepe at this day. But it appeareth by Zach. 13. 4. that the prophets had a certaine kinde of cloake whereby they were distinguished from the rest of the people. And it was not without a cause that the teachers should be so apparelled, that there might be more grauity and modesty in their apparell, then in the common sort. But the Scribes had wickedly turned that to serue their pleasure and pompe. The which example the popish sacrificers wrested to serue them, whose robes appeare to bee nothing else but badges and tokens of their proud tyrannie.

6. *And they loue the cheife rourmes.* He proueth by manifest signes, that the Scribes had no desire of godlinesse in them, but were altogether giuen to ambition. For none doe desire the cheife rourmes, and the cheife seates, but they which had rather to be proudly extold amongst men, then to bee approued of God. But Christ doth condemne this especially in them, that they desired to bee called maisters. For though the name Rabbi signified of it selfe excellency, yet it was growne at that time into such an vse amongst the Iewes, that they called the maisters and teachers of the lawe by that name. But Christe sayeth that this honour belongeth not to any man but to himselfe alone: whereof it followeth, that it cannot bee giuen to men without doing iniurie to him, But this seemeth to bee too hard and absurde, sith that Christ doth not teach vs now by himselfe, but ordaineth and setteth maisters ouer vs, and it were a folly to take away the name from them, to whom he giueth the office. Yea, when hee was conuersant vpon the earth, he ordained Apostles which should go and teach in his name. If that the question be of the title, Paul certainly woulde not haue gloried in that which he vsurped by doing iniurie and sacriledge to Christe, when he called himselfe the maister and doctour of the Gentiles, 1. Tim. 2. 7. But because that Christes purpose was to bring all from the least to the greatest into order, that euery one might haue his owne right, there is no cause why any man should strue about the word. Therefore Christ regardeth not how they be called, which discharge the office of teaching, but he tieth them within their bondes, least they should raigne ouer the faith of the brethren. For this distinction must alwayes be holden, that Christ onely must bee obeyed, because the voyce of the father spake from heauen of him onely.

Heare him. And the doctours must bee his ministers, so as hee may be heard in them, and they may bee maisters vnder him, because that they supply his
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roune. The summe is, that he may haue his authority wholly to himselfe, and that no mortall man should take the least part of it away from him. So he is the onely pastour : but yet he admitteth many pastours vnder him, so that he onely may be about all, and may gouerne the church by them. So the contrary must be noted : for because that wee are brethen, no man must strue to vse maister-ship ouer others. And so it followeth, that such maister-ship as doeth not violate brotherly felowship amongst the godly, is not condemned. To be short, here is nothing els commanded, but that all men should depende of Christes mouth onely. Paul reasoneth almost after the same maner, when he sayth that wee are forbidden to iudge rashly one of an other, because we are all brethen, and wee all shall appeare before the iudgement seat of Christ. Rom. 14. 10.

9. *And call no man your father.* Hee chalengeth the honour of a father to God alone, almost in the same sense, in which he sayd euen now that hee was the onely maister. For men tooke not this name to themselves, but it was granted them by GOD. Wherefore it is not onely lawfull to call them our fathers vpon earth, but it is a wicked thing to deprive them of that honour. Neyther is that distinction which some doe make, to any purpose, that men which doe beget children, are fathers according to the flesh : but that God onely is the father of the spirites. I grant that God is so distinguished sometime from men (as to the Hebrewes 12. 6.) but sith Paul doth often call himselfe a spirituall father, 1. Corinthians 4. 15. and to the Philippians 2. 22. it must be seene howe that agreeth with the wordes of Christ. Therefore this is the true meaning the honour of a father is giuen wrongfully to men, if the glory of God be thereby darkened. And that doth come to passe so oft as mortall man will be accounted a father of himselfe without God, when as all degrees of kinred doe depende of God alone through Christ, & they doe so agree amongst themselves, that God is properly the onely father of al men. So the former sentence of the maister-ship of Christ is againe rehearsed the second time, that we might know this to bee the lawfull order, if God alone doe rule and enioy a fatherly right and authoritie ouer all men : and Christ would haue all men subiect, & become disciples to his doctrine. As it is sayd other where, that Christe is the onely head of the Church. Ephes. 1. 22. because that it is meete that the whole body bee subiect and obedient to him.

11. *But he that is the greatest amongst you.* In this sentence he declareth that he doth not Sophistically quarrell about wordes, but hath rather respect to the matter : least any man forgetfull of his estate, should take vpon him more then is meete. Therefore hee sayeth that the greatest dignitie in the Church is not to rule, but to minister. Who soeuer keepeth himselfe in this measure, robbeth neyther God nor Christ of any thing, what title so euer he haue. So againe that authoritie which derogateth from the maister-ship of Christ, doth pretend the title of a seruant in vaine. For what profiteth it the Pope when hee hath oppressed poore soules with tyrannous lawes, to call himselfe the seruant of the seruants of God, but that hee might openly rise vp against God, and opprobriously laugh men to scorne?

But as Christe doeth not stand vpon wordes, so hee gaue this pre-
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cise commandement to his Disciples, that they should not aspire nor desire to clime higher, that they may equally maintaine a brotherly fellowship vnder the heauenly Father : and that they which doe excell in honour, should become seruants to others. Hee addeth that notable sentence which is expounded in an other place. Hee that exalteth himselfe, shall be brought low, &c.

Mathewe 23.

Marke 12.

Luke 11.

13. *Woe therefore be vnto you Scribes & Pharisees, hypocrites, because ye shut vp the kingdome of heauen before menne : for yee your selues goe not in, neither suffer yee them that would enter, to come in.*

14. *Woe be vnto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites : for yee deuour widomes houses, euen vnder a colour of long prayer, wherefore yee shall receiue the greater damnation.*

15. *Woe bee vnto you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites : for yee compasse sea and lande to make one of your profession : and when hee is made, yee make him two folde more the childe of hell, then you your selues.*

40. *Which deuour widomes houses, euen vnder a colour of long prayer : these shall receiue the greater damnation.*

32. *Woe be to you interpreters of the lawe : for ye haue take away the key of knowledge : yee entred not in your selues & them that came in, ye forbade.*

Luke 10.

47. *which deuour widomes houses, euen vnder a colour of longe prayinge : these shall receiue greater damnation.*

He inueigheth yet more sharply against them, and hee doeth it not so much for their cause, as that he might call backe the common and simple people from their secte. For though we see the vengeance of God against the reprobate proposed oft times in the scripture, that they might be the more inexcusable: yet vnder the persone of them, the children of God doe receiue profitable admonitions, least they should intangle themselves in the same snares of wickednes, but that they should beware of the like destruction. For when the Scribes hauing ouerthrowne the worshippe of GOD, and corrupted the doctrine of godlinesse, would beare no correction, and in a desperate madnesse opposed themselves (to the destruction of themselves and the whole people) against the redemption profered, it was meete that they should bee made odious and detestable to all men. Though Christe did not so much respecte what they had deserued, as what was profitable for the rude and vnlearned people. For his will was, at the ende of his life, to leaue some solemne testimonie, that no manne might but hee which wittingly and willingly would, bee deceiued by those vngodly knaues. And wee knowe what a hinderance the foolish reuerence of the false teachers was to the simple, least they shoulde bee deliuered from errors. The Iewes were then defiled with false doctrine, yea they had drunke vp many superstitions euen from their infancie. Sith it was a difficult and harde matter of it selfe to draw them backe into the way, they were most hindered by a preposterous opinion which they hadde conceyued of the false teachers, for that they thought the false teachers to bee the lawfull pa-
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flours of the Church, the chiefe maisters of the worships of God, and pillars of godlinesse. Adde also, that they were so bewitched, that they could scarce bee drawne from thence, but by a violent feare. Therefore Christ denounceth the horrible iudgement of God against the, not that he might heale the Scribes, but that hee might driue the rest by feare from their deceitfull practises. As at this day wee are enforced to thunder the sharply against the Popish cleargie, not for any other cause, but that they which are apte to be taught, and not altogether cast away, should giue eare to their saluation, and being smitten with the iudgement of God, should breake those deadly superstitious snares wherein they are holden prisoners. Whereof it may bee gathered, that their tender daintines is crueltie, which are troubled with our earnest vehemency. It displeaseth them that the wolues should be so sharply and hardly handled, which doe daily seeke to kill and to deuoure the sheepe: and yet they see the miserable sheepe deceiued with a vaine pompe, cast themselues willingly into the wolues iawes, except the Pastours who desireth that they should bee safe, and endeuoureth to deliuer them from destruction, should driue them away with a loude crying voyce. Therefore the purpose of Christ must be remembered, that we after his example might seuerely threaten those wicked deceiuers, and cry out aloud against them: that whosoever are curable may flee from them for feare of destruction. For though the enemies of the truth do not profit thereby, yet they must be cited to the tribunall seat of God, and others must be warned, that the same curse is ready to fall vpon them, if they depart not speedily from that wicked company.

13. *You shutte vp the kingdome of heauen.* Christ pronounceth a curse against them, because they peruerter their office to the generall destruction of all the people. For sith the gouernement of the Church was in their handes, they should haue bene as porters of the kingdome of heauen. For where vnto belongeth religion and sacred doctrine, but to open the heauens for vs? For wee knowe that all mankind is banished from the kingdome of God, and shutte out of the inheritance of eternall saluation. And the doctrine of godlinesse, is as the gate whereby we enter into life, therefore the scripture sayeth Metaphorically, that the keyes of the kingdome of heauen, are giuen to the pastours: as I haue shewed more at large in the sixteenth Chapter. And this definition must be remembered, which is more plainly deliuered in Lukes words, where christ ypbraideth the lawyers, because they tooke away the key of knowledge: Namely, because that they being the keepers of the law of God, defrauded the people of the true vnderstanding of the same.

Therefore, as at this day the keyes of the kingdome of heauen are committed to the pastours, that they should admitte the saythfull into eternall life, & should driue the vnfaithfull from all hope of the same: so in times past was the same office committed to the Priests and Scribes vnder the law.

Further, by the woorde knowledge wee doe gather howe foolishly the Papistes doe make their fantastickall keyes: as if it were a certaine Magickall power without the woorde of GOD. Christe sayeth that none canne vse these keyes, but they which are minystrs of the woorde

If any man will obieſt, that the Pharifies, though they were corrupt interpreters of the law, had yet the keyes : I anſwere though they were committed vnto them in reſpect of their office, yet they were ſo ouerwhelmed with malice & deceit, that there remained no uſe of them. Therefore Chriſt ſayeth that they had taken away, or ſtolne away the key of knowledge, wherewith they ſhould haue opened the gate of heauen. As at this day heauen is ſhut vp in Popery againſt the miſerable people, while the porters (at the laſt they to whome this charge was committed) doe by their tyranny hinder the opening of the ſame. So that vnleſſe we were very blocks, wee would not willingly giue our hands to vngodly tyrants, who do cruelly hinder vs from entring into life.

14. *For ye denoure.* Now he proceedeth further. For he doth not only lay open their finnes, which were worthy of hatred and deteſtation, but alſo he diſcouereth their ſained and diſſemled vertues wherewith they deceiued the people. If any man would ſay, that it was not needefull to reprove thoſe thinges, the example whereof were not hurtfull, it muſt be remembred, that the ſaluatiō of them could not otherwiſe bee prouided for, which were intangled in the errors of the Scribes, except they ſhould altogether depart frō them. This cauſe therefore compelled Chriſt to ſpeake againſt their vaine ſhew of holines, which was the nurſe of ſuperſtitious. Therefore he ſaith in ſum, that euen there where they ſeemed to do well they did wickedly abuſe the pretence of religion. There was ſome ſigne of rare godlineſſe in their long prayers : for the holier a man is, the more he is giuen to the exerciſe of prayer. But Chriſt ſayeth that the Scribes and Pharifſes are ſo wicked, that they could not uſe the chiefe part of religion without ſinne : for their cuſtome to pray was for filthy gaine take. For they ſold their prayers as hired labourers doe their dayes workes. Whereof wee doe alſo gather that he doth not preciſely forbid long prayers, as if the thing it ſelfe were ſinfull (eſpecially ſith it behoueth the paſtours of the Church to be much bent to prayer) but this corruption is condemned, that a thing which of it ſelfe is commendable, ſhould be turned to a wicked ende. For where as gaine is gotten by ſetting prayers out to hire, the more ſeruent (as they ſay) and deuout they ſeeme to bee, the more is the name of God prophaned. But becauſe the mindes of the people had bene wrongfully perſwaded a long time, Chriſt doth therefore threaten them the ſharplier. For the pollution of ſo holy a thing could not be any ſmall fault. And it is no meruell that they eſpecially went about to entrap widowes : for ſuch ſimple women were bent to ſuperſtition, it was alwayes a common matter for lewd men to make their gaine of them. So Paule obieſteth againſt the falſe teachers of his time, that they ledde captiue ſimple women laden with finnes, 2. Tim. 3. 6.

15. *For ye compaſſe ſea and lande.* The Scribes hadde gotten them fauour by this their zeale, for that they laboured to bring ſtraungers and the vncircumciſed to the Iewiſh religion. And ſo if they hadde gotten any manne by their ſweete perſwaſions or any other ſubiltie, they triumphed wonderfully as though the Church were encreaſed. For this cauſe alſo hadde they much allowance of the common people, for that by their induſtry and the power of God they hadde brought ſtraungers to the Church. But Chriſt ſayeth to the contrary, that they are ſo far from being worthy of prayſe for their labor

that

that they rather prouoke the vengeance of God thereby more & more against themselves: for they drawe them which ioine themselves, to their secte, into a greater destruction. For it must bee noted how corrupt the estate, and howe confused religion was at that time: for as it was a notable worke and a godly, to bring disciples to God: so to bring the Gentiles to the Iewish religion (which was at that time degenerate and stuffed full of wicked prophanations) was nothing else but to draw them out of Scylla into Charybdis. Furthermore by their sacrilegious abusing of the name of God, they prouoked the greater vengeance against themselves, for that by reason of religion they tooke the greater libertie to sinne. The like example may be seene at this day amongst the Monkes, for they doe busily scrape together Profelites from all places, but such as of wantons, and of men of a wicked life they doe make very deuils. For such is the corruption of those denes wherein they keepe their Bacchus banquets, as woulde corrupt euen the Angels of heauen. Yet euery kinde of the Monkes apparrell, is a fit couer for their sinnes.

Mathewe. 23.

Marke.

Luke.

16. Woe bee to you blinde guides, which say: whosoever sweareth by the Temple, it is nothing but whosoever sweareth by the gold of the temple: he offendeth.

17. Ye fooles and blinde whether is greater the gold or the temple that sanctifieth the gold?

18. And whosoever sweareth by the altar, it is nothing: but whosoever sweareth by the offering that is vpon it offendeth.

19. Ye fooles and blinde, whether is greater, the offering, or the altar which sanctifieth the offering?

20. Whosoever therefore sweareth by the altar, sweareth by it, and by all things thereon.

21. And whosoever sweareth by the temple sweareth by it and, by him that dwelleth therein.

22. And hee that sweareth by heauen, sweareth by the thron of God, and by him that sitteth thereon.

16. Woe be to you blinde guides. As ambition is almost alwayes ioyned with hypocrisie, so the couetousnesse and extortion of the pastours is wont to nourish the superstitions of the people. The worlde doeth willingly runne into errors: yea, it doeth as it were procure it selfe to bee deceiued and beguiled euery way: but then doe falshey and corrupt vwoorshippings take place amongst them, when the chiefe maisters of religion doe confirme them. And it commeth to passe for the most part. that the gouernours doe not onely fauour those errors by winking at them, but they doe rather kindle them, and sette them the more on fire with their bellowes, because they see them gainefull for them. So we see in Poperie, that when the sacrificers doe gape for gaine, superstition encreaseth many wayes: for they doe yet daily deuise many things wherewith they might the more bewitch the simple multitude.

And when Sathan hath once darkened their eyes with his mists, there is nothing so absurd or monstrous that they will not receiue euen with greedinesse. Hereof it came to passe that the Iewes gaue more reuerence to the the golde of the temple, and to the holy offerings, then to the temple or to the altar. But the holines of the offerings depended vpon the temple and the altar, and this was onely a meaner addition to the same. And it is to bee supposed that the Scribes and Priestes were the authors of this fanisie: for it was a fit way for to get them gaine. But the error was no lesse daungerous then foolish, because that it caried the people to grosse imaginations. There is not any thing more easie then for men to fall awaye from the true worshippe of God. With the helpe therefore of this saile, it was an easie matter for Sathan to draw the altogether away from God, who alreadie were bent more then was meete to foolish imaginations. This is the reason why Christ doth so sharply rebuke that error. And yet the papists were not ashamed to abuse the holy name of God more shamefully then so, For a crust of winowed bread, was more accounted of amongst them, then the holy booke of boeth testaments: or else to lift vppe the handes to heauen. So by this meanes there was brought in a fleshly worshipping of God, which by litle and litle blotted out all true feare of him.

It is nothing He doth not meane by this word that all honour was taken away from the temple: but hee speaketh by the way of comparifon. For when they extold their oblations more then was meete, the common people was drawne into such a reuerence of them, that the maiesty of the temple and the altar was not accounted of, and they made lesse conscience of prophaning the same with periuries, then to sweare vnreuerently by the holy offerings.

18. *And who soeuer sweareth by the altar.* The Lord doth that heere, which was meete to be done in reproofing of errorrs, in this that hee calleth vs backe to the fountaine, and teacheth vs by the nature of an oath, that the temple doth farre excell their offerings. Therefore he taketh that principle, that it is not lawfull to sweare but by the name of God, whereof it followeth, that what maner of oathes soeuer men shall deuise, God will haue his honour reserued to himselfe alone. Whereof it is to be gathered againe, howe and in what respect it is lawfull to sweare by the temple: namely, because it is the seate and sanctuary of God: as by heauen, because the glory of G O D doth shine there. For in such outward tokens of his presence, the Lord suffereth himselfe to be called to be a witnesse and a iudge, so that hee may reserue his owne right safe vnto himselfe, For it were sinfull idolatrie to imagine that heauen had a Godhead. Nowe, the more token God hath set of his glory in the temple, then in offerings, the more reuerence and estimation doth the name of the temple deserue. Nowe therefore wee doe vnderstand in what sense Christ, sayeth, that in swearing by heauen, he that dwelleth in heauen is sworne by, for that he would direct all maner of oathes to their lawfull ende and purpose.

Math. 23.

Marke.

Luke. 11.

23. Woe bee to you Scribes and Pharisees hypocrites: for yee sithe Minte, and Anise and Commin, and leaue the weightier matters of the lawe, as iudgement, and mercy, and fidelitie. These ought ye to haue done, and not to haue leste the other.

24. Yee blinde guides, which straine out a gnatte, and swallowe a camel.

25. Woe be to you scribes and Pharisees and hypocrites: for ye make cleane the viter side of the cuppe, and of the platter: but within they are full of briberye and excesse.

26. Thou blinde Pharise, cleanse first the inside of the cuppe, and platter, that the out sides of them may be cleane also.

27. Woe be to you Scribes and Pharisees. hypocrites: for ye are like vnto whyted tombes which appeare beautifull outward but are within ful of dead bones and of al filthinesse.

28. So are yee also: for outward ye appeare righteous vnto menne, but within yee are full of hypocrisie and iniquitie.

42. But woe bee to you Pharisees: for yee sithe the Mint and the Rewe, and all maner of herbes, and the loue of God: these oughte yee to haue done, and not to haue leste the other yndone.

A little after.

44. Woe be to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for ye are as graues which appeare not, and the men which walke ouer them. perceiuenos.

Christ reprooeth that fault in the Scribes, which all hypocrites haue: for they are very diligent and carefull in small matters, and they neglecte the greater poyntes of the lawe. This disease raigned almoste in all ages, and in all nations, so that the greater sorte of the people thought lightly to please God with some small obseruation. And because they could not except themselves wholly from all obedience, they flee to this seconde remedy, that they might redeeme their hainous offences with satisfactions of no value. So we see the Papists at this day, when they transgresse the greatest commandments, they are very earnest to satisfie him with colde ceremonies. Therefore Christ now reprooeth such dissimulation in the Scribes, who were very diligent and scrupulous in paying their tythes and little regarded the chiefe poyntes of the lawe. Further that hee might the rather make their vile ostentation to bee loathed, he doth not say that they payed tithes of al things but of Mint, Anise seed and as Luke sayeth of all maner of herbs: that with a little cost they might make a shew of a rare desire of godlinesse. Yet because that Christ putte the chiefe righteousness of the lawe in mercy, iudgement and faith, wee must first see what he meaneth by these wordes: then why he omitted the commandments of the first table, which doe properly pertaine to the worship of God, as if godlinesse were inferiour to charitie. Iudgement is taken for equitie or vpright dealing, whereby it commeth to passe that euery man hath that giuen him which is his owne, and that no man should defraud or hurt others.

Q9. 4.

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But mercy extendeth further, as that euery man shoulde endeouour to helpe his brethren with that whiche hee hathe, to helpe the poore with counsell or goodes, to defend them which are vniustly oppressed, and with a good will to employ that power he hath for their common good. Faith is nothing else but a sincere simplicitie which attempteth nothing subtilly, maliciously, or through deceit: but seeke that plaine dealing be mutually vsed amongst all menne, in euery thing wherein they haue to doe one with an other. And so charitie is accounted to be the summe of the law. I know that there are some which doe otherwise interpret the word faith, as that by the figure Synecdoche it should comprehend the whole worshipp of God: but Christ heere after his manner doeth diligently trie their holynesse by their loue to their brethren, and therefore he toucheth not the first table at all.

And though Luke putteth in the loue of God for faith, yet doeth it not make against this sense: for it was the purpose of Christe, to shewe what the Lorde doeth especially require of vs in the law. And it is well knowne that the law was deuised in two tables, that hee might shewe first what was due to the Lorde, and after what was due to menne. And Luke setteth downe both partes, as if Christ should say, that the lawe did principally tende to this, that we shoulde loue God, and bee vpright and mercifull towards our neighbours, Mathewe was content with the one table onely, and it is no absurdity to call the duties of charity the chiefe Poyntes in the law, sith that Paule to the Romanes 13. 18. calleth charitie it selfe the perfection of the law, as he sayeth in another place that the law is fulfilled if we loue our neighbours. And Christ being demanded before of the commaundements of the lawe, onely rehearseth these of the second table:

If any man would object that by this meanes men should be preferred before God, because the charitie which is done to them, is more accounted of then religion, it is easily answered: the second Table of the law is not opposed here against the first, but he rather proueth by the obseruation of the second, whether their worship of God be true and from the heart. Because that godlines lyeth hidde within, and that God is not conuersant amongst vs to try our loue towards him, and needeth not our seruice, it is an easie matter for hypocrites to lye, and falsly to pretend the loue of God.

And because the worke of brotherly charity may be seene and iudged of all men, their impudency is the better reprobued by them. Christ therefore would not subtilly dispute in this place of the seuerall partes of righteousness, or of the order of them: but as the common capacity of menne could conceaue, hee taught simply, that the law of God is then truly obserued, when they behaue themselves vprightly, louingly, and truly rowardes each other: for so they doe witnesseth that they doe loue and reuerence G O D, and doe shew forth a lawfull and fit testimony of sincere godlynesse. Not that it shall auail to doe our duty towards menne, except that God haue his due: but because it doth necessarily follow that he should be a true worshipper of God, which frameth his life after his apPOINTMENT. But yet the question is not thoroughly answered: for the tythes before the which Christe preferreth equity and mercy,

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were a part of the worshipp of God, and some part of them was wont to bee bestowed amongst the poore: so there was a double sacrifice in thm. I answer, he doth not simply compare here the tithes with almes and faith & iudgement: but the fained holines of the Scribes with sincere and perfect charity. For why were they so ready and willing to pay tythes, but that they would please God with a small charge & trouble? For they were not bent to do it thoroughly. And therefore it might not be numbred amongst the works of charity, because that in small matters they dissembled both with God and men.

23. *These things you should haue done* It is an answer wherewith Christ preuenteth their quarrel For they might haue ouerthwartly quarrelled at his speech, as if he should make no account of that, which was commanded in the law of God. Therefore he graunteth, that what things soeuer God hath commaunded must be obserued, and not any thing of the same omitted: but the loue of the whole law is no impediment, to hinder them from obeying the chiefe poynts. Whereof he gathereth that they deale preposterously, which busie themselves in small matters, when they shoulde rather begin at the chiefe, for the tithes were but an addition to the law. Therefore Christe sayeth, that it was not his minde to derogate from the authoritie of the least commaundementes, though hee commendeth and requireth an order in the obseruation of the law. The whole law therefore remaineth sound, which cannot bee broken in any poynt without the contempt of the authour. For he which hath forbidden to commit whoredom, and to kill, and to steale, hath also condemned all concupiscence. Whereby we gather that all the commaundementes are so knit together, that it is not lawfull to disceuer the one from the other. Wherefore it is also written: Cursed is hee that doth not all things that are wrytten. In which words the whole righteousnesse of the law is sanctified without exception: but this regard, as we said, taketh not away the difference betweene the commaundementes, nor the purpose of the law: whereto the true obseruers of the same doe direct their minde, least they should onely play with the outward shew.

24. *Yee blinde guides.* It is a prouerbe, which doeth well set forth the vile scrupulositie of hypocrites in small matters. For at small sinnes they tremble, as if they had rather die an hundred deaths, then fall into one such transgression: but in most grievous sinnes they doe fauourably flatter themselves and others. Therefore they doe as much, as if a man shoulde straine at a crumme of bread, and swallow downe a whole loafe. We knowe that a gnat is a small creature, and a camell a great beast: nothing therefore is more ridiculous then to straine wine or water, least thou shouldest hurt thy iawes with swallowing vpe a gnat, but carelesly suppe vp a camell. But it is manifest that hypocrites doe dally with such toyes: for when they passe by iudgement, mercy and sayth, and neglect the whole lawe, they are very austere and sharpe in matters of no great weight. And when by this meanes they would seeme to kisse Gods feete, they doe disdainefully spit in his face.

25. *Ye make cleane the outward side.* The Lorde prosecuteth the same sentence, and after this manner, as in a figure, he reproveth the Scribes, because that they did not onely regard this to bee accounted before men. For by the outward side of the platter, hee doeth Metaphorically note the out-

ward shew. As if that he should say, you haue no regard of cleannes, but of that which is to the outward appearance: euen like as if any manne should diligently wipe away the filth from the out side of the cuppe, and should leaue the inside filthy. This is a borrowed manner of speech, as it appeareth by the seconde parte of this sentence, where the inward filthinesse is condemned, and that because they were inwardly full of intemperaunce and rapine. Therefore hee reprooueth their hypocrisie, because they onely sought to frame their lues to the eyes of men, that they might get themselues the report and vaine fame of holiness. Therefore he calleth them backe to a pure and sincere desire to liue well. Make cleane, saith hee, first that which is within: for it were a ridiculous thing to feede the eyes with outward cleannes, and to drinke of a cuppe foule with dregges, or filthy by other meanes.

27. *You are like to whited tombes.* Heere is an other similitude, but it tendeth to the same ende. For hee compareth them to tombes, which the men of the worlde doe ambitiously make fayre and gorgeous for themselves. Therefore as the painting and pargeting of tombes draweth mennes eyes to looke vpon them, when as they are full of dead carcasses within: so Christe sayth, that hypocrites do deceiue with the outward shevv, because that they are full of fraud and wickednesse. Luke vseth other wordes, as that they deceiue mennes eyes, as the graues which they do not often perceiue, which walke ouer them: yet the meaning of them both is one, for vnder the pretence of fained holinesse there lay filthynesse hidden, which they nourished in their heartes: euen as the marble tombe, because it maketh a fayre and pleasant shewe, couereth the filthines of the carcasses, least it should offend them that passe that way. Whereby we gather that which I sayd before, that Christe puld of their paynted visor, that he might helpe the simple and vlearned people, who the Scribes through dissimulation kept in bondage vnder them. For this admonition was profitable to the simple, that they might the speedilyer withdrawe themselves out of the iawes of the wolues. Yet this doctrine containeth a generall doctrine, that the children of God should not so much desire to be seene, as to be pure.

Matth. 23.

29. *Woe be to you Scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites: for yee builde the tombes of the Prophets, & garnish the sepulchres of the righteous.*

30. *And say, if wee had bene in the dayes of our fathers, we would not haue bene partners with them in the blood of the prophets.*

31. *And then yee bee witnesses vnto your selues, that yee are the children of thē that murdered the Prophets.*

32. *Fulfill*

Mark.

47. *Woe bee to you: for yee builde the sepulchres of the Prophets, & your fathers killed thē.*

48. *Truely yee beare witnesse, and allow the deedes of your fathers: for they killed them, & ye build their sepulchres.*

49. *Therefore said the wisdom of God, I will sende them Prophets and Apostles, and of them they shall slay and persecute.*

50. *That*

Luke 11.

32. Fulfil ye also the measure of your fathers:

33. O serpents, the generation of vipers how should ye escape the damnation of hell? 34 Wherefore behoulde, I sende vnto you Prophets, and wise men, and Scribes, and of them ye shall kil and crucifie: and of them shall ye scourge in your Synagogues, and persecute from city to city:

35. That vpon you may come all the righteous blood that was shed vpon the earth, from the blood of Abell the righteous, vnto the blood of Zacharias, the son of Barachias, whom yee slew bet weene the temple and the altar

36. Verely I saye vnto you, all these things shall come vpon this generation.

37. Ierusalem, Ierusalem, which killest the Prophetes and stonest them which are sent to thee, how often would I haue gathered thy children together, as the hen gathereth her chickens vnder her winges, and ye would not:

38. Behoulde your habitation shall be left vnto you desolate.

39 For I say vnto you yee shall not see me henceforth, till that ye say, blessed is he that commeth in the name of the Lord.

50. That the blood of all the prophetes shed from the foundation of the world, may be required of this generation. 51 From the blood of Abel vnto the blood of Zacharias, which was slaine betweene the altar and the temple: verely I say vnto you, it shall be required of this generation.

Luke. 13.

34. O Ierusalem, Ierusalem, which killest the Prophetes, and stonest them that are sent to thee, how often would I haue gathered thy children together, as the hen gathereth her broode vnder her winges: & ye would not.

35. Behold your house is left vnto you desolated: & verely I tel you ye shal not see me vntill the time come, that yee shall say blessed is hee that commeth in the name of the Lord.

Luke 12.

53. And as hee said these thinges vnto them, the Scribes and Pharisees began to vrge him sore, and to prouoke him to speake of manye thinges:

54. Laying waite for him and seeking to catch some thing of his mouth whereby they might accuse him.

29. For you builde the tombes. Some doe wrongfully thinke that he reprooued the Scribes of superstition, because that they preposterously honoured the Prophetes, which are dead, with sumptuous Sepulchres, as the Papistes now doe giue the honour due to God to dead Saintes, and doe wickedly worshippe their images. They were not at that time so blinde nor so madde: wherefore Christ had another purpose: The Scribes also by this dissimulation gat themselves credit amongst the vnlearned people, and amongst all the Iewes, because that they reuerently esteemed the memory of the Prophetes. For when they in this maner faigned to maintaine their doctrine, euery man would haue thought that they had beene faithfull followers, and most earnest and zealous keepers of the worship of God. Therefore it was a thing very plausible, to build the monuments of the Prophetes: for by this meanes religion was puld as it were out of darkenesse, to be honoured:

But they meant nothing lesse then to restore the doctrine, which might seeme to haue bin ouerthrowne by the death of the Prophets. But though they were strangers and most cruell enemies of the doctrine of the prophets, yet beeing dead they honoured them with sepulchres, as if that they maintayned one cause with them. And this is the maner of hypocrites, to honour the holy ministers of God and pure teachers after their death, whom they could not abide in their life. And this cometh not onely of common corruption (which Horace noteth in these wordes, of enuie we hate vertue when it is present, and seeke for it, when it is taken away:) but beecause the dead ashes doe not trouble them any more with sharpe and seuerer rebukes, they do willingly make a vaine shew of religion in worshipping of them, at whose wordes and speech they had beene almost mad. For this dissimulation, to desire to worships the dumbe, is not much to be regarded. So all the Prophetes in their tyme were contumeliously reiected, and much troubled of the Iewes yea, and they were oft times most cruelly slaine: And the posteritie which came after them, being nothing better then their fathers, rather reuerenced the memory of them as in a shadow, then imbraced their doctrine: for that they hated that as much as their teachers. For as the worlde, beecause it dareth not despise God altogether, or at the least to arise against him altogether, inuenteth this subtill deuise, to worship a shadowe of God for God: it vseth the like mockery with the Prophets. Whereof there is too plaine experience in Popery: for they being not content with the lawfull reuerence of the Apostles and Martyres, doe worship them as Gods: and what honours soeuer they doe heape vppe together, they doe not thinke that they doe exceede measure: yet by their raging against the faithfull, they doe declare how they would worship the Apostles and Martyrs, if they were alieue at this day, and should do their office they did in times past. For why are they so outrageous against vs, but beecause we desire that the doctrine which the Apostles and Martyrs sealed with their bloud might be receiued and flourish.

Further, sith the holy seruantes of God esteemed it more pretious then their owne life, would they spare their life, which doe so outrageously persecute the doctrine? Therefore let them adorne the Images of Saintes with incense, candles, flowers, and with al kind of pompes at their pleasure. if Peter were now a lieue, they would teare him in peeces, they would ouerthrow Paule with stones: if Christ himselfe liued yet in the world, they would roast him with a small fire. And beecause the Lord saw the Scribes and sacrificers of his time, seeke to be prayseed of the people, as holy worshippers of the Prophets, he reprocueth them for deceitfull dealing, beecause they doe not onely refuse the Prophetes, which were presently sent vnto them, but they doe cruelly trouble them. And therein doth their vile dissimulation and grosse impudency bewray it selfe, while they desire to seeme religious in worshipping of the dead, and labour to ouerthrowe them that are alieue.

30. *If wee had beene in the dayes of our fathers.* Christe spake not this in vaine. For though hee doe not accuse them in the person of their Fathers, nor doeth impute it as a fault to them, for that they were murderers children: yet hee doeth by the way reprocue their vaine boasting, beecause they vsed to glory of their kindred, who yet were the offspring of bloudie enemies

mies of God. The sentence therefore must bee expounded thus. The worshippe which you doe to the Prophetes which are dead, is as you thinke, a sacrifice for your fathers sinnes. Therefore I doe now conclude this. that you doe glory in vaine of a holy kinred, when you come of vngodly and wicked parentes. Goe nowe and couer your wickednesse with their godlinesse, whose handes you confesse were defiled with innocent blood. But you commit a far greater offence: for the sacrilegious madnes of your fathers, which you doe condemne in the sepulchres of the dead, you doe follow in murdering them that liue. Wherefore hee concludeth at the length, that in this matter they were not degenerate from their fathers: as if that he should haue sayde, your nation doth not beginne now to rage against the Prophetes of God: for this is an olde order, this custome was vsed of the fathers: to bee short, this manner of dealing is as it were planted in you. But he doth not command them to do, as they doe, as to kill the holy teachers, but he doth figuratiuely declare that by right of inheritance they doe rise against the seruants of God, and haue libertie giuen them to oppresse the truth: for by this meanes they fulfill the wickednesse which was wanting in their fathers, and they weaue vp the webbe, which they began. And in these wordes he doth not onely say that they are past hope, and such as cannot bee brought againe to their right minde: but hee admonisheth the simple, that it is no meruaile if the Prophetes of God be euill handled by the murderers children.

33. *O generations of vipers.* After that Christ hath shewed that the Scribes are not onely wicked enemies of godly doctrine and faithlesse corruptours of the worshippe of God, but also deadly plagues of the Church: he maketh an ende of his speech, inueigheth more sharpely against them, as it is necessary that the hypocrits shoulde be violently shaken or driuen from their dainties, and drawne as it were before the tribunall seate of God, that they might bee terrified: yet Christ had not onely respect vnto them, but his purpose was to make all the people afride, that all might beware of the like destruction. But how hard and intolerable these sharpe wordes were to these reuerend maisters, may be gathered by this, that their gouernement had now beene peaceably settled to them by long custome, so that no manne durst murmur against them. And without doubt many were offended at the freedome of Christ his wordes, they were so bitter: and he was accounted very froward and immodest, for that he durst speake so reproachfully of the order of the Scribes, as at this day many dainty menne cannot abide to heare any thing spoken sharpely of the Popish cleargy. But because that Christ hadde to doe with most vile hypocrits, which were not onely puffed vp with a disdainfull contempte of God, and were drunken with a vaine confidence in themselves, but they had bewitched the common people with their vaine shewes, therefore it was necessary that he should deale the vehementlyer against them: therefore he calleth them serpents aswell in nature as in manners. but he pronounceth a vengeance against them, which they shall not escape except they repent speedily.

34. *Therefore beholde I sende.* Luke setteth it downe somewhat plainelier, *Wherefore the wisdom of God also sayde,* which some interpreters doe expounde thus, I which am the eternall wisdom of God doe pronounce of you.

Yet

Yet I doe rather allow that God should speake this vnder the person of his wisdom, after the vsuall manner of the Scripture : so the sense shoulde bee this, God hath spoken of you before in the spirit of Prophesie what should come to passe. I graunt that the very wordes of this sentence are not read in any place : but because that God doth euery where reprove the vntamed frowardnesse of his people, Christ maketh as it were a briefe collection, & sheweth more plainly in this, mouing the Lord to speake againe, what the iudgement of God was, of the incurable wickednes of this nation. For it might seeme a wonder, if the teachers had done nothing worthy the noting, why the Lord would try them out speedily. For so men doe reason, God loseth his labour, when hee sendeth his word to the reprobate, whom hee knoweth to be obstinate. And the hypocrites doe hope that God is mercifull and fauourable to them, because they hadde daily preachers of the heauenly doctrine amongst them, as though this onely were sufficient, that the outward worde was preached amongst them, though they would neuer learne any thing thereby. So the Iewes made great boast of themselves, that they far excelled all other nations in this their hauing of Prophets and doctours : as if they hadde deserued so great an honour, & that this had bene an euident signe of their dignity,

Christe that hee might beate downe this their foolish arrogancy, doth not onely say, that they are no better then other nations, because that God hath vouchsafed to send Prophets and notable interpreters of his wisdom vnto the: but he proueth that this grace being abused, shall be their greater rebuke, and the more to their destruction : for the purpose of God was farre otherwise then they imagined : namely, that he might make them the more inexcusable, and that the heape of their wicked malice might bee brought to the full height, as if he shoulde haue sayde, you doe very fondly and foolishly pretende this as an honour to you that God hath sent you Prophetes. For God hath determined another thing in his secrete iudgement, that by this continuall course of calling of them so louingly, hee might openly discouer your wicked obstinacie: and that hee might when hee hath brought the same to passe, destroy the children and the fathers together. As concerning the wordes, the sentence in Matthew wanteth somewhat, the sense whereof must be supplied out of Lukes words.

Hee numbrell the Scribes and the wise menne with the Prophetes, that hee might amplifie and sette forth the grace of God. Whereby their vnthankfulnesse dooth the more appeare: that when God had omitted no meanes that might serue for their destruction, yet it preuailed nothing. Luke for the Scribes and wise menne placeth the Apostles, but the sense is all one. This place doeth also teach, that God doth not alwayes saue menne so oft as hee sendeth his worde vnto them : but his will is that it shall bee preached to the reprobate, whome hee knoweth to bee obstinate, that it might bee vnto them a sauour of death vnto death. The worde of God is of it selfe and of the owne nature wholsome, and calleth all menne generally to the hope of eternall life: but because that all menne are not moued inwardly, neither doth God open the eares of all menne : to bee short, because that all menne are not renew-

ed by repentaunce, nor brought to obedience: whoſoeuer doe reſuſe the worde of God, doe by their vnbeliefe turne it to their deſtruction and make it deadly to them. When God knoweth before that it ſhall come ſo to paſſe, hee doth purpoſely ſend his Prophets vnto them, that he might caſt the reprobate headlong into the greater deſtruction: as hee declareth more at large, Iſay, 6. 10. I graunt that this agreeth not with the reaſon of manne, as wee ſee the wicked contemners of God, doe take a iolly occaſion to barke out, that G O D, as ſome cruell tyrant, ſhould delight himſelfe in the greater deſtruction of menne, whom without hope of profiting, he doth wittingly and willingly blind & harden more and more. But God doth by ſuch inſtructions teach the faithfull modestie. Therefore let vs learne this ſobrietie, fearefully to reuerence that which paſſeth our vnderſtanding. They whiche doe ſay that the foreknowledge of God is no hinderance, but that the vnbeleeuers may bee ſaued, they doe fondly excuſe God with a vaine defence.

I graunt that the reprobate doe not ſeeker their owne death, becauſe that God foreſawe that it ſhould be ſo, and therefore their deſtruction cannot bee aſcribed to his foreknowledge: but I ſay that the righteouſneſſe of God is not thus rightly defended, for it may be preſently obiected, that it is in the power of G O D that they doe not repent, becauſe that the giſte of faith and repentaunce is in his hand. This may alſo bee obiected, what the meaning of this ſhoulde bee, that G O D of ſette and deliberate purpoſe appoynteth the light of his worde to blinde menne: why is hee not contented ſimply with the deſtruction of them that are appoynted to eternall death, but would haue them periſh twiſe or thrice? There is no other aunſwere to be made, but to giue this glory to the iudgements of God, that we may cry with Paule, that it is a profound and vnſearchable depth, Romanes, 11. 33. But it is demanded howe G O D ſhould ſay, that the propheſies were giuen to the Iewes for their deſtruction, when as his adoption did alwayes flouriſh effectually in that nation. I anſwere, when as onely a ſmall remnaunt embraced the word by faith to ſaluation, he ſpeaketh heere of the greater number or of the whole bodie: as where Iſaias, 8. 6. foretelleth the generall deſtruction of that nation, hee is commaunded to ſeale vpp the lawe of God amongſt the diſciples. Therefore wee muſt knowe, that as oft as the ſcripture iudgeth the Iewes to eternall death, the remnaunts are alwayes excepted, in whom the Lorde preſerueth ſome ſeede, becauſe of his owne free election.

35. *That vpon you may come all the righteous blood.* He doth not onely take from the that which they wrongfully tooke to themſelues, but he teacheth that the Prophetes were giuen them altogether to an other end, that no age might be free from the ſinne of rebelling againſt God. For the Pronowne *you* dooth generally comprehend the whole nation from their beginning. If any man would obiect that it agreeth not with the iudgement of God, that the children ſhould be puniſhed for the offence of the fathers: the anſwere is ready, ſith they ioyned with them together in that vngodly conſpiracy, it muſt not ſeeme abſurde, if God generally puniſhing all men, ſhould caſt the puniſhment due to the fathers into the boſome of the children.

There-

Therefore the account of perpetuall contempt is iustly exacted and required of the whole nation, and the punishment is laid vpon them at once, though some of them liued at one age, and others in another. For as God by the long continuance of his patience, shroue continually with the malice of the whole people, so the whole people is worthily found guilty of stubbornnes, which would not be amended, but continued euen to the last of it, and as all those ages slew their Prophets, as if they had agreed vpon the same, so it was meete that they should be called to a generall iudgement, and that all those slaughters which were done with one consent, should be reuenged vpon them all.

From the blood of Abel. Though Abel was not slaine by the Iewes, yet Christ imputeth his death vnto them, because there was a certaine kindred of vngodlynesse betweene them & Caine: otherwise that which he sayth could not agree, that the righteous blood euen from the beginning of the world was shed by this generation. Caine therefore is accounted as the head and the prince and author of the Iewish people, for since they began to kill the Prophets, they succeeded in his rourne, whose steps they followed. Further, hee nameth Zachariah, not as if that he were the last martyr (for the Iewes made not ende then of murdering the Prophets: but their boldnesse & rage rather encreased thereby, and their posterities which followed them, made themselves drunken with the blood which their fathers had onely tasted:) neyther yet for that his death were more famous and knowne, though the holy scripture reporteth the same: but there is an other reason, which is worthy to bee noted, but the interpreters saw it not. Whereby it came to passe, that they not only staggered themselves but also entangled their readers with a troublesome question. For so Christ might seeme to haue beene forgetfull in making mention of this one slaughter, which had beene done of olde, and passeth an innumerable sorte of murders, which were committed afterwarde vnder Manasse. Neyther did the Iewes cease to persecute good men at the time when they were lead into captiuitie, yea, when they were now afflicted, we know how cruelly they raged against Ieremias, 32. 1. But the Lorde of set purpose did not vpbraide them for these late murders, but rather chose this which had bin done so long before (which was a beginning & fountaine of a wicked libertie, so that afterward they brake out into an vnbrideled crueltie) because that it was most apt for his purpose. For this was the cheife end of his purpose, as I shewed euen now, to proue that nation (sith it ceased not from wickednes) guiltie of all those murders, which had beene committed long before. Therefore hee doth not onely pronounce vengeance against them for this present crueltie: but he sayth that they shall yeelde a reckoning for the blood of Zachariah, as if their handes were yet wet with his blood. Neyther is their opinion probable, which doe referre this to Zacharyah, who exhorted the people which were brought backe from the captiuitie of Babylon to builde the Temple, whose Propheties doe yet remaine. For though the tyle of the Booke declareth that he was the Sonne of Barachias, yet wee reade not in any place that hee was slaine. Further, that exposition is wrested, that hee was slaine in the meane time betweene the building of the Altar and the Temple. But the scripture maketh mention of another Zachariah the sonne of Ieiada, which agreeth best with this place: for

For, when after the death of his father true Religion decayed by the vngodly falling away of the king and the people, hee being moued by the spirit of God, reprooued sharply their publike idolatry : and therefore hee was slayne in the court of the Temple. And it is no absurditie to say that his Father Ioiada had the name of Barachiah giuen him for honour sake : for sith in all his life he was a defender of the true worshippe, hee might worthily be accounted the blessed of God. But whether Ioiada had two names, or whether there was a fault in the worde (as Hierome imagineth) the matter is not to be doubted of, but that Christ noteth that sacrilegious lioning of Zachariah, which is recorded in the second booke of the Chronicles, the 24. chap. verse 22. The circumstance of the place augmenteth the haynoultnesse of the faulte : for that they regarded not the holinesse of the place. Further, the Temple is taken here for the court or porch, as in other places. The Altar of burnt offerings was neare to this place, that the Priest might offer the sacrifices in the sight of the people. Therefore it appeareth that their madnesse was too outrageous, which the sight of the altar and Temple could not appease, but that the Iewes would defile the holy place with horrible murder.

37. *Ierusalem, Ierusalem*, Christ declareth more evidently how iust a cause he had to be angry, that Ierusalem, (which God had chosen for a sanctuary and a heavenly dwelling place) had not onely shewed it selfe vnworthy of so great honour, but was a den of theeuers and had accustomed now a long time to shed the blood of the Prophetes. Christ therefore with great affection cryeth out at so great a wonder, because that the holy city of God was false to that madnesse, that it shoulde so lately endeavour to blotte out the wholsome doctrine of God with the blood of the Prophetes. And therefore he rehearsed the name, because that so wonderfull and incredible wickednesse was worthy of no small detestation.

And Christ doth not reprocue them for one murder or two, but he sayeth that the city was growne into such a custome, that it ceased not to slay the Prophetes, how many fouer were sent vnto them. For the Participle is put in the place of an Epithite, as if Christ should haue saide, thou which oughtest to haue been a faithfull keeper of the word of God, the mistresse of heavenly wisdom, the light of the woilde, the fountaine of true doctrine, the seate of the worshippe of GOD, an example of fayth and obedience, art become a murderer of the Prophetes : so that now thou hast gotten a certaine habit in sucking their blood. Therefore it doeth hereby appeare, that they which hadde so filthily prophaned the sanctuary of GOD, were worthy of all kinde of reproaches.

It was Christes purpose also, to meeete with the offence which was at hande : leaste the faythfull when they shoulde see him slayne at Ierusalem without a cause, shoulde bee troubled at the straungenesse of suche a sight. For they were now admonished at these woordes, that it was no meruaile, if that City which hadde beene accustomed to slay or stone the Prophetes, shoulde cruelly slaye their Redeemer. But heereby it appeareth howe much it is conuenient to attribute to places. GOD hadde giuen such notable ornamentes to no City in the worlde, nor so honourably

bly exalted any as this : yet wee see howe vnthankfull it became : Nowe lette the Pope compare the seate of his sheeuery with that holy Cittie : what shall hee finde worthy of the like honour ? his hyred flatterers doe boast to vs , that sayth flourished there in times past . If wee shoulde graunt that to bee true, if it appeare at this day to be alienated and false away from Christ through infidelitie, and that it is full of innumerable sacrilegies, howe fondly doe they glory that the honour of the supremacie is tyed vnto it ? And lette vs rather learne by this example worthy to bee remembered, that the higher any place is sette by the great benefittes of G O D , and thereby exempted from other places there aboutes, if it degenerate, it shall not onely bee spoyled of those ornamentes, but it shall bee so much more odious and execrable, because it hath filthily polluted the glory of G O D , by defiling the beautie of his graces.

How oft would I. It is rather a worde of disdainne then of compassion. Hee pittyth as yet the city it selfe, ouer the which he had wept a little before, but hee dealt more hardly and sharply towards the Scribes the authours of saluation, as they had deserued. Neither doth he spare the rest, for that they were all faulty, allowers and companions of the same sinne. but he proueth all alike guiltie, inueigheth specially against their leaders and guides, which were the cause of all those euilles.

Nowe the vehemency of the speech must me noted. If the grace of G O D hadde beene simply denyed to Ierusalem, their vnthankfulnesse might so much the lesse haue beene excused, : but sith God tryed by louingnesse and gentlenesse to allure the Iewes vnto him, and preuailed nothing by so great gentlenesse, the offence of their proude contempt was so much the greater . Heere is also to bee added their vtained frowardnesse : for G O D went not about to gather once, or twice, but continually time after time hee sent vnto them diuers prophetes : all which almost were refused for the most parte . Nowe wee vnderstande why Christe in the person of G O D compareth himselfe to a Henne : namely, that hee might lay so much the more shame vpon this wicked nation, which hadde refused his sweete and more then motherly allurements . And certainly this was a wonderfull and incomparable token of loue, that hee disdayned not to humble himselfe euen to entreate them, that hee might so by that meanes bringe those rebbelles to obey him.

The like reproofe almoste is sette downe by Moses, Deuteronomy 32.11. that G O D as an Eagle embraceth the people with stretched out winges. And though God dooth not stretch out his winges in one sorte or manner to nourish that people, yet Christe doeth peculiarly apply this manner of speech, to this one thing : namely, that G O D sent his Prophetes, to gather them which wandred and went astray into the bosome of God. whereby he declareth that the word of God is neuer opened vnto vs, but that he with a motherly kindnesse openeth his lappe vnto them : and not satisfied therewith, hee would humble himselfe to the simple affectiō of a Henne in nourishing her chickens. Whereof it followeth that our cruelty is more then monstrous, if we will not suffer our selues to bee gathered together by him . Certainly, if of the
one.

one part we could remember the fearefull maiestie of G O D, and of the other our owne vile and base estate, we should be compeld for shame to stand amased at so great and wonderfull goodnesse . For what meaneth this, that God shoulde humble himselfe so farre for our sakes : when hee taketh vpon him the person of a mother, hee humbleth himselfe farre beneath his glory : how much further then, when hee becommeth like vnto a Henne, and vouchsafeth to account vs as his chickens ? Further, if this was worthily objected to the olde people, which lyued vnder the law, it dooth much more pertaine to vs. For though that was alwayes true, which I cited enen now out of Moses, and also that those complaints are true, which are read in Isaiah, 65. 2. that God hath daily spread out his armes in vaine to embrace a stiffe and rebellious people, that by ryling early and taking dayly care hee could preuaile nothing amongst them : yet at this day hee calleth vs more familiarly and louingly vnto him by his Sonne. Wherefore there remaineth a horrible vengeance for vs, so ofte as hee propoeth the doctrine of the gospel, if that wee do not willingly hide our selues vnder his winges, with the which hee is ready to take and couer vs. Yet Christ teacheth that all they shall rest in safetie, which in obedience of faith doe gather themselves to God : for vnder his wings they haue a fort, whiche cannot be ouerthrowne.

The other part also of the reproofe must be noted, that God was not presently so moued with the peruerse frowardnesse of the olde people, as that it shoulde cause him to cast away his fatherly loue and motherly care, which as hee ceased not continually to send Prophetes after Prophetes. As at this day though hee hath too much experience of the wickednesse of the worlde, yet hee continueth the course of his sauour . There is yet a further thing to be noted in these wordes : namely, that the Iewes fell from him, as soone as the Lord hadde gathered them . Heereby wee note by their falling away so ofte, that they rested quietly scarce the space of a moment vnder the winges of G O D, such wildenes is seene at this daye in the worlde, and hath bene also in all ages : therefore it is necessarye that God shoulde call vnto him them that wander and goe astray.

But this is the most desperate conclusion of wickednesse, when menne doe stubbornely refuse the goodnesse of G O D, and refuse to come vnder his winges . That also, which I sayde before, that Christ spake in the personne of G O D, I interpret that this speech dooth properly belong to his eternall Godhead . For hee doth not declare heere what hee beganne to doe, sith hee was manifested in the flesh, but hee sheweth howe carefull hee hath bene for the saluation of this people euen from the beeginning . And wee know that the Church was so gouerned of G O D, that Christe gouerned it, as hee was the eternall wisedome of G O D . In the whiche sense Paule saith not that G O D the Father, but CHRIST himselfe was tempted in the deserte, 1. Corin. 10. 9. This place is wrested by cauillers for the prooffe of free will, and to ouerthrowe the secrete predestination of G O D : but it is easily answered . They saye the Lorde woulde gather all menne : therefore it is free for all menne to come, and their will dooth not depend of Gods electi-

on.

I answered that the will of God, whereof there is mention made heere, is to be considered of the effect. For when as by his word he calleth all men generally to bee saved, and this is the ende of preaching, that all men should repose themselves in his keeping and faith, it is rightly sayd, that hee would gather all men vnto him. Therefore hee describeth not heere the secreet counsell of God, but that will which is learned by the nature of the word. For he doth not onely call them by the outward voyce of man, whome hee would gather effectually, but he draweth them inwardly by his spirit. If any man should object that it were absurd to imagine GOD to haue two willes: I answered, wee doe not beleue otherwise, but that the will of GOD shoulde bee one and simple: but because that our mindes cannot reach the profounde depth of the secreet election, but according to the simplicitie of our capacitie the will of God is proposed to vs two wayes. And I maruaile at the frowarde heades of some that are nothing offended at that humane affectiō, which is found so oft in the Scripture, and will not admit it in this place onely. But because that I haue handled this argument at large in another place, least I shoulde bee longer in a needlesse matter, I onely say in a worde, that as soone as the doctrine, which is the ensigne of vnitie, is brought amongst the people, GOD woulde gather all menne: whosoever doe not come are inexcusable.

37. *And you would not.* This may bee referred as well to the whole nation, as to the Scribes: yet I do rather expound it of them, by whom that gathering together was most hindred. For Christe enuighed against them in the whole course of his speech: and now when he spake to Ierusalem in the singular number, it presently appeareth that hee altered not the number without a cause. But there is a vehement opposition betwene the will of God and their vnwillingnes: for it expresth the deuillish fury of men, which set themselves to striue against God.

38. *Beholde your habitation shall bee left.* Hee foretelleth the destruction of the Temple, and the ouerthrow of the whole common wealth. For though they were defiled with vngodlines, wickednesse, and all maner of infamy: yet they were so blinded with a corrupt hope in outward worshippe, and of the Temple, so that they thought God bound vnto them. And they had this buckler alwayes ready: what? will God departe from this place, which he onely chose vnto himselfe alone in all the earth? If that hee dwelleth amongst vs, he must of necessitie restore vs at the length. To be short, they held the Temple as a Fort vnuanquishable, as if they sate in Gods lappe. But Christe proueth that they glory of the presence of God in vaine, whom they hadde driuen from them by their sinnes, and by calling it their house he sheweth plainly that it is the house of God no more.

The temple of GOD was builded of this condition, that it might cease to bee the seate and place of GOD, at the comming of Christ: yet it should haue stode as a notable monument of the perpetuall grace of GOD, if the sinne of the people had not prouoked the destruction of the same. This therefore was the horrible vengeance of GOD, that hee not onely forsooke and would al together ouerthrowe that place, which hee had so royally and so beuati-

bewtifully adorned, but left it so as a note of extreame ignominye and shame to the end of the world. Now let the Romanes goe, and let them proceede in extolling their tower of Babilon in spite of God, when they see the temple of God built by the allowance and commaundement of God, ouerthrowne for the sinnes of the people.

39. For *Isay vnto you*. He confirmeth that which he had spoken beefore, that the vengeance of God was neere at hand: and the onely meanes to escape that destruction should be taken from them. For that was the acceptable time, that was the day of saluation, so long as he which was come to be their Redeemer was the witnesse and preacher of the redemption which he brought. But at his departure the light of life vainisheth away, euen as it were at the setting of the sunne. Wherefore it was necessary that this miserable destruction should followe, which hee speaketh of. Now it is demaunded what time is noted by this phrase, *vntill yee shall say*. Some tye this to the last daye of iudgement: o-ther some thinke that it is a prophetic of that which was fulfilled shortly after. When as some of the Iewes should in humility worshipsse Christe. But I like neither of these interpretations, and certainly I meruaile that learned menne, should make such a doubt at so light a matter, when they doe so doubtfully de-maund, how the vnfaithfull should say of Christ, *Blessed is he which commeth, &c.* For he doth not declare what they should become, but what he himselfe would doe. For that aduerbe *vntill* extendeth no further, then to the time which goeth beefore. Ioseph laye not with his wife vntill shee brought forth Christ. The Scripture doth not meane by these wordes, that they afterward came to-gether as manne and wife after the byrth: but onely declareth that Mary was a virginne vntouched of manne, beefore the byrth of her Sonne. Therefore in my iudgemente this is the naturall sense of this present place. Hetherto I haue behaued my selfe humbly and louingly amongst you, and haue discharged the office of a teacher.

Now the course of my calling being finished, I will depart, and you shall not enioy me hereafter: but the redeemer and minister of saluation whom you doe now despise, you shall find & try to be a iudge. So this place agreeth with that of Zachary, 12. 10. They shall see him, whome they haue pearced through. But Christ also seemeth to reprove after this sort their vaine hypocrisie, that as men earnestly desired their promised saluation, did sing dayly out of the Psalme, *Blessed is hee which commeth in the name of the Lord*: and yet they had the Redeemer in derision, when he was offered them. Further, hee saith, that hee will not come at them, vntill that at the sight of his maiesty horrible to be seene, they shall cry out as menne afrayd, but too late, truely this is the Sonne of God. And this threatning doth belong to all the contēners of the gospel: especially the which do wrongfully pretend his name: & yet refuse his doctrine: for they shall know at the length that they cannot escape his handes, whom they laugh now to scorne with their fained dissimulation. For the Papistes sing the same song at this day, & yet they make no account of Christ, vntill he ascend to his trybunall seate, armed with reuenge. Wee are also admonished so longe as Christe appeareth vnto vs in the name of the Father, as a messenger and me-diator of saluation, to honour him not onely with the lippes, but sincerely to

desire that he may bring vs and all the world in obedience to him.

L V. 53. *And as he sayd these things vnto them.* I sayd euen now that Luke put not former sentences in their proper place: for when hee reporteth that Christ reprobued the Scribes at a certaine dinner, he addeth also withall, his last words, wherewith their offences a little before his death were layd open. So also Luke setteth downe the next reproofe in the thirteene chapter, where he rehearseth another hy storie.

If any man had rather follow their opinion, which doe thinke that Christ rehearsed the same wordes oft times, I doe not greatly stand against them: Now after that Luke had rehearsed the curses spoken of a little before, at the length hee concludeth, that all the Scribes hated Christ the more, so that they ceased not to seeke to deceiue him by laying snares to intrap and catch him. The which must rather be referred to that speach had at the table, then to his last sermon. But I haue not much regarded to be curious about the time, which the Euangelist neglected.

Math.

Marke, 12.

Luke. 21.

41. *And as Iesus sate ouer against the treasury, he beheld how the people caste money into the treasury, & many riche men caste in much.*

42. *And there came a certaine poore widow, and shee shrewe in two mites, which made a quadrin.*

43. *Then hee called vnto him his disciples, and sayd vnto them verely I say vnto you, that this poore widow hath cast in more then all they, which haue cast into the treasury.*

44. *For they all did caste in of theyr superfluitie: but shee of her povertie did cast in all that shee had euen all her liuing,*

1. *And as hee beheld, hee sawe the rich men, which cast theyr gifts into the treasury.*

2. *And he sawe also a certaine poore widow, which cast in shether two mites,*

3. *And he said, of a trueth I say vnto you, that this poore widow hath cast in more then they all.*

4. *For they all haue of theyr superfluitie cast into the offerings of God: but shee of her pennurye hath cast in all the lyuing that shee had.*

43. *Verely I say vnto you.* This answer of Christ containeth very profitable doctrine, whatsoeuer men doe offer to God is not valued after the outward price, but according to the affection of the heart: yea, his godlinesse is more worth, who according to his ability offereth that little he hath, to God, then he which offereth a hundred fold more of his abundance. This doctrine is profitable two wayes. For the Lord encourageth the poore, which want ability to doe well, that they should not be afraid cheerefully to testifie their good will with that little they haue: for if they consecrate themselues, their offering, though it bee in thew but vile and vaine, shall bee as much esteemed as if they offered all Croesus treasures.

Again:

Again, they which haue abundance, and doe giue many giftes are admonished, that it is not sufficient for them to excell the common and poore people in giuing: for it is lesse to bee accounted of before God for a rich man to giue a meane summe, then for a poore man for to bestow a litle, being that which he hath. Further, this widow was very godly: for shee had rather be without meate her selfe, then that shee would appeare empty before the Lord. And the Lord commendeth this simplicity for that the forgetting her selfe, declared that she and all that she had belonged to God. As also the chief Sacrifice which is required of vs, is to deny our selues. And though it is to be supposed that the holy offerings were not rightly bestowed at that tyme, nor to lawfull vses: yet because that the maner of worshipp appointed by the lawe was yet in force, Christ doth not reiect them. And certainly the corruption of men could not bring it to passe, but that the holy worshippers of God would according to his commandement offer for the sacrifices and other godly vses.

Math. 24.

Mark. 13

Luke 21.

1. And Iesus went out, and departed from the temple, and his disciples came to him to shew him the building of the Temple.

2. And Iesus said vnto them, see yee not all these things? verely I say vnto you there shal not be here leste a stone vpon a stone, that shall not bee caste downe.

3. And as he sate vpon the mounte of Olyues, his Disciples came vnto him a parte, sayinge, tell vs when these things shall be, and what signe shalbe of thy coming, & of the ende of the world,

4. And Iesus answered and saide vnto them, take heed, that no man deceiue you.

5. For many shall come in my name, sayinge, I am Christe, and shall deceiue many.

6. And

1. And as hee went out of the Temple, one of his disciples said vnto him: mayster se what stones & what buildinges are here.

2. Then Iesus answered & said vnto him seest thou these great buildinges? there shall not be left one stone vpon a stone, that shall not be throwne downe.

3. And as hee sate on the mount of Olyues over against the temple, Peter & Iames, & Iohn & Andrew asked him secretly:

4. Tell vs when shall these thinges be and what shalbe the signe, when all these things shalbe fulfilled?

5. And Iesus answered them, & began to saye take heed, least any man deceiue you.

6. For many shall come in my name, sayinge, I am Christ, and shall deceiue many.

7. For

5. Now as some spake of the Temple, howe it was garnished with goodly stones, and with consecrate thinges, hee sayd,

6. Are these the thinges that yee looke vpon? the dayes will come, wherein a stone shall not be left vpon a stone, that shall not be throwne downe.

7. Then they asked him, saying, maister, but when shall these thinges bee and what signe shall there bee, when these thinges shall come to passe?

8. And hee saide, take heede, that yee bee not deceiued: for many wyll come in my name saying, I am Christ and the time draweth neere: followe yee not them therefore.

9. And when yee heare of warres, and seditions, bee not afrayde: for these thinges must first come, but the ende followeth not by and by.

10. Then

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6. And yee shall heare of warres, & rumour of warres, so that ye be not troubled for all these things must come to passe, but the ende is not yet.

7. For nation shall rise against nation, and realme against realme & there shall be pestilence and famine, & earthquakes in diuerse places.

8. All these are but the beginning of sorrowes.

7. Furshermore when yee shall heare of warres and rumours of warres, bee yee not troubled: for such things must needs be but the ende shall not be yet.

8. For nation shall rise against nation, & kingdome against kingdome, & there shall be earthquakes in diuerse quarters and there

shall be famine & troubles these are the beginnings of sorrowes.

10. Then sayde hee vnto them, nation, shall rise against nation, and kingdome against kingdome,

11. And great earthquakes shall bee in diuerse places and hunger, and pestilence fearefull thinges and great segnes shall there bee from heauen.

1. And Iesus went out and departed. The Disciples perceiued that Christe gaue this as his last farewell to the Temple. Therefore it was meete that hee should erect a new Temple more bewtifull then this, and a more flourishing estate of a kingdome, as the Prophetes had foretolde. For they had nothing to doe with that Temple, wherein all things were so out of order and against the But yet the Disciples thought it incredible, that the Temple so strongly built & so gorgeous, should giue place to Christ.

And this must be noted diligently: for sith the outward bewtie of the Temple was such as was to bee wondred at, their eyes were so set vpon the present glory of the same, that they coule scarcely hope that the kingdome of Christ might spring vp. They doe not expressly confesse their doubt, but they doe shewe the same secretly, when as they doe obiect to Christ the great heape and hugenes of the stones, which should bee ouerthrowne, yea and brought to nothing, if that hee would raigne. Also such admiration at the estate of Popery, which holdeth many simple men at this day: for they see them furnished with great abundance of wealth and mightie power, they are presently so amased, that the base and simple shew of the Church seemeth vile & contemptible vnto them. Many also thinke that wee are deceiued, when wee goe about the overthrow of that kingdome, euen as if it were as hard a matter as to pull the sunne out of heauen. And it is no maruaile, if Christes disciples were amased at that notable sight. For how much that building cost Herod, may bee gathered by this, that he had tenne thousand workemen labouring about the same continually for the space of eight yeares. And they doe not wonder at the stones without a cause: for they were very goodly and fayre, Iosephus writeth that they were fifteene cubites long, twelue high, and eight broad. And now it was so much reuerenced in forraine countryes, that no man durst scarcely suspecte that it coule at any time be ouerthrowne.

2. Verily I say vnto you, one stone shall not be left vpon an other. Because the greatnesse and wealth of the Temple (being sette as a vaile before their eyes) hindred them from beleeuing that the kingdome of CHRIST

was at hande : therefore hee affirmeth by an oath, that whatsoeuer thinges doe hinder them, shoulde shortly perish. So the foretelling of the destruction of the Temple, made a way ready for the rude and weake people. And though it was profitable that the Temple should be ouerthrowne, least it should keepe the Iewes in this ceremoniall kinde of worshippe, who of themselves were giuen too much to earthly elementes : yet this was a speciall reason, that God by that horrible example would be reuenged vpon that nation for the refusing of his sonne, and contempt of the grace hee offered them. Wherefore it was meete that the disciples shoulde by this forewarning bee drawne away from the society of that rebellious people. So at this day whatsoeuer the scripture foretellerh of the punishments of the wicked shoulde driue vs from those sinnes which prouoke the wrath of God. Also, whatsoeuer it teacheth of the transitory and vaine fashion of the worlde, it shoulde correcte the vanitie of our minde, which followeth too greedily after pompe, pleasure, and delights. And especially that which hee foretellet of the fearefull destruction of Antichrist and his secte, shoulde remoue away all those lettes, which doe hinder vs in the right courte offaich.

3. *And as he saie vpon the mount.* Marke nameth foure, Peter, Iames, Iohn, & Andrew. He and Luke doe not set downe so much as Matthew. For they say that they enquired only of the time of the destruction of the temple, (& because it was a thing hard to be beleued) what signe God would giue from heauen, that the same shuld come to passe. But Matthew reporteth that they asked the question of the time, of the comming of Christ, & of the end of the world. But it may bee noted how they had thought euen from their childhood, that the Temple should stand for euer, and their minds were so wholly bent vpon the same, that they thought the temple could not fall while the world stode. Therefore as soone as Christ said that the temple should be destroyed, they presently thought with themselves of the end of the world. And (as errour begetteth errour) because they were perswaded, that presently at the beginning of the kingdome of Christe, they should bee happy euery way, they presently speede to the triumph before the battell. Therefore they ioyne the comming of Christ, and the ende of the world together, with the destruction of the temple, as things which could not be seperate: & by the end of the worlde they vnderstand the restoring of all thinges, when nothing should be wanting of the perfecte felicitie of the godly. Therefore wee see nowe how they leape to diuers questions at once, because they were entangled in these fantasies, that the temple coulde not fall, but that it should shake the whole worlde: that the shadowes of the law and the worlde should end together. that the glory of the kingdome of Christ should presently appeare which shoulde make the children of God perfectly happy: that the apparant renewing of the worlde was at hande, which shoulde presently bring all things confused into order. And especially the hope which they hadde fondly conceived before of the present kingdome of Christ, doth driue them preposterously to hast to the happy rest. As in the Act. 1. 6. when they see Christe risen from the dead, they runne headlong to that felicitie which is layde vppe for vs in heauen, to the which wee must aspire by hope and patience. And though our estate is not like theirs, because we are not trayned vppe in the shadowes of the

law, so that the superstitious opinion that the kingdom of Christ should be earthly hath not befotted vs, yet there shall scarce be found one amongst a hundred, which is not troubled with the like disease. For when all men do by nature loath troubles, contentions, and all manner of afflictions, the wearinesse of those things, vrgeth them without moderation and without hope to hast before the time to the fruite of sayth. So it cometh to passe that no man is willing to sow, and all men woulde mow before the time. But to returne to the disciples, they had the good seede of faith in their heartes, but they would not tary for the time appointed: and they hauing corrupt fantasies, seeke to thrust the perfection of the kingdom of Christ together with the beginning: & that which they should seeke for in heauen, they sought to enioy vpon the earth.

4. *Iesus answered.* They had such an answer as liked them not. For when they gaped for the tryumph, as if the warre were ended, Christ exhorteth them to long sufferance: as if he should haue sayde, you would receiue the price at the first beginning of the race: but of necessity you must runne forth the race. You would haue the kingdome of God vpon the earth, but no man can attaine vnto it, except that he ascend into heauen. But sith this chapter containeth most notable admonitions & instructions for the gouernment of the course of our life, we see how by the wonderfull counsell of God it was brought to passe, that the Apostles errour turned to our profit.

This is the summe, the preaching of the Gospell is like vnto a sowing time: and therefore we must with patience wait for the haruest time, and they are too dainty & effeminate, which are discouraged in their minds for the frost, snowes, cloudes, or the sharpe tempests of winter. Christ doth especially giue his disciples comauendement of too things, that they should beware of false doctrines, and that they shoulde not bee troubled by offences. In which woordes, hee declareth that his Church shall bee subiecte to such troubles, while it wandreth in the world. But this might seeme very vnlikely, because that the Prophetes hadde foretolde that the kingdome of Christe shoulde bee in another sorte. *Isaias 54. 13.* promiseth that they shall all bee then taught of God. And by *Iocell* it is reported, *2. 28.* I will poure my spirite vpon all fleshe, and your sonnes and daughters shall prophesie, your young menne shall see visions, and your olde menne shall dreame dreames. *Jeremiah* also promisieth a brighter light of vnderstanding, *31. 34.* They shall teach no more euery manne his neighbour, and euery manne his brother, sayinge: knowe the Lorde, for they shall knowe mee from the least of them to the greatest of them. Therefore at the rising of the Sunne of righteousnesse, as it was spokē of before by the Prophet *Malachi 4. 2.* it is no maruell if the Iewes hoped that they were sette free and cleare from all cloudes of errors. And heereof the woman of *Samaritan* sayd, *Ioh 4. 25.* when the *Messias* shall come, he will teach vs all things. So now we knowe howe great promises doe euery where appeare of peace, righteousness, ioy, and of abundance of all good thinges. Wherefore it is not to bee meruailed at, if they thought that by Christes comming, they should bee exempted from troubles of warres, from spoyles, from all maner of iniurie, & also from famine and pestilence. But Christ declareth that they shall haue no lesse trouble hereafter with false teachers, then the olde people hadde with false

false prophets : and that there shall be no lesse troubles vnder the Gospell, then there were in times past vnder the lawe. Not that those prophesies which I touched euen now, were not fulfilled : but because they were not fully performed presently at the first day. For it is sufficient that the faithfull haue onely a taste giuen them now of those good things, that they might nourish the hope they haue of the full enioying of them hereafter.

And therefore they were much deceiued, which would haue all things perfectly performed at the beginning of the Gospell, which we se fulfilled every day. Furthermore, though the wickednesse of men cannot altogether make of none effect that felicity which the Prophets said should be in the kingdome of Christ yet it hindereth and troubleth the same. The Lord causeth, by struiuing with the malice of men, that his blessings finde way through all lets : and certainly it were absurd, that the thing which is established vpon the free goodnes of God, and dependeth not vpon their pleasure, should bee abolished for their fault. Yet that they might receiue some reward of their vnthankfulnessse, he doth onely distill his graces by a little at once, which otherwise should be powred downe in great abundance. Hence commeth the Laborinth of so many mischiefes, through the which all the faithfull doe wander all their life, though Christ beeing their captaine, and bearing the light of his Gospell before them, they holde the ready way to saluation.

Hence arise the heape of so many contentions, that they shall passe through sharpe warres, but yet without danger. Hence spring so many and so sodaine troubles, that they are troubled with miserable disquietnesse but yet by the helpe of Christ they continue stedfast to the ende. Also, when Christ commaundeth his disciples to take heede of deceites, we are to vnderstand that they shall not want meanes to auoyd them, so that they bee carefull themselves. Wherefore lette vs be sure, if any of vs doe diligently apply himselfe to watch in his place and calling, what subtilties soeuer sathan shal deuise, we shall be free from them.

5. *For many shall come.* He doth nor yet speake generally of corrupt and false doctrines, but toucheth one kind, which was as a beginning of all errors, with the which Sathan endeuoured sundry wayes to ouerthrow the pure doctrine of the Gospell. For shortly after the resurrection of Christ, there arose deceiuers, and every one of them professed himselfe to bee Christ. And because the true redeemer was not onely taken from among them, but put to the shameful death of the crosse, and the mindes of all men were moued and kindled to hope and to desire their redemption, they had a meanes ready at hande to deceiue them. And it is not to be doubted but that God gaue the Iewes ouer to be deceiued by such guiles, for that they had so wickedly reiected his son. And though those mad roies were quickly brought to nothing, yet it was the will of god that the Iewes should haue such tumults amongst them : first, that they might make themselves infamous and odious, then that the hope of saluation might be taken from them altogether : lastly, that they being so often deceiued, might in a brutish blockishnes, run headlong to their owne destruction. For when the worlde slpt from the sonne of God, whose office it is to gather vs into an holy vnitie, it is meete that it should be caried hither and thither as in tempestuous waues.

And

And by the same vengeance of God it came to passe, that moe were caried away with a fond opinion, then true faith brought to obey God. And Christ sette downe this circumstance of purpose, least the faithfull beholding the multitude of such madde people, should growe faint and weary. For we know how easie a matter it is to follow after the multitude, especially where wee are but few in number.

6. *And yee shall heare of warres.* In this place hee onely maketh mention of the stirres which fell out amongst the Iewes: for shortly after hee will shewe that the same should creepe further. And as he first commaunded them to take heede least any man shoulde deceiue them, so now hee commaunderh them to be of good courage when they heare of the rumours of warres, and of warres themselves. For it was daungerous, least they being ouerwhelmed with euils, should fall away, especially, if they had promised and perswaded themselves of a peaceable, ioyfull and quiet estate. He addeth that these things must come to passe assigning no cause but declaring that none of these things shall fall out by fortune, but by the prouidence of God, least they should kick in vaine against the pricke. For there is nothing more effectual to bring vs in obedience, then whe we know that God according to his pleasure, gouerneth euen those things whiche seeme most confused. God hath iust causes and great reasons, why hee suffereth the world to be troubled: but because it is meet that the faithfull should rest vpo his only pleasure it was sufficiēt for Christ to exhort his disciples to beare these things with patiēt minds, & to abide cōstant: because it so pleased the Lord.

But the end is not yet. He plainly declareth as I sayd euen now, that these were greuous of these times, yet they were but as the beginnings of greater troubles: for when this flame of warres had consumed Iudea, it should wast further. For after that the doctrine of the gospel was spred, the like vnthankfullnesse kindled also the wrath of God amongst other nations. Hereof it commeth to passe that they which had broken the couenant and band of peace with God, should with mutuall dissentions rent themselves in pieces: they which refused to obey the authority of God, were driuen to yeelde to the force of the enemies, they which would not be reconciled to God, should fall to tumults and troubles amongst themselves: to be short, they which hadde exempted themselves from the heavenly saluation, should by raging one against another, fill the earth with slaughters. Further, because he knewe how great the malice of the world would be, hee addeth againe, that these are but the beginnings of sorrowes: not that the faithfull shoulde ouerwhelme themselves with sorrowe (who haue comfort at hande alwayes in the midst of troubles) but that they might prepare themselves with patience to abide a longtime.

Luke also addeth *Earthquakes and signes from heauen.* Of whiche thinges, though there remaine no certaine hystory, yet it is sufficient that Christ spake of them before, They which will, may read the rest in Iosephus.

Mathewe 24.

Marke 13.

Luke 21.

9. Then shall they deli-
uer you vp to bee af-
flicted,

9. But take yee heede to your
selues: for they shall deliuer you
vp

12. But before all these, they
shall lay their hands on you, &
perse-

sifted, and shall kill you, and yee shall be hated of all nations for my names sake.

10. And then shall manye be offended, and shall betray one another, and shall hate one other,

11. And many false prophetes shall arise, and shall deceiue many.

12. And because iniquitie shall be encreased, the loue of manye shall be colde.

13. But he that endureth to the ende, he shall be saved.

14. And this gospell of the kingdome shall be preached through the whole world for a witnesse vnto all nations, and then shall the ende come.

vnto the counsels, and to the synagogues: yee shall be beaten, and brought before rulers and kings, for my sake, for a testimoniall vnto them.

10. And the gospell must first be published among all nations,

11. But when they lead you and deliuer you vnto take yee no thought before, neither premeditate what you shall say: but what soeuer is giuen you at the same time that speake: for it is not yee that speake but the holy Ghost.

12. Yea, and the brother shall deliuer the brother to death, and the father the son, & the children shall rise against the parents and shall cause them to die.

13. And yee shall be hated of all men for my names sake: but whosoever shall endure to the ende, shall be saved.

persecute you, deliuering you vnto the synagogues and into prisons, and bring you before kings and rulers for my names sake. 13. And

this shall turne to you for a testimoniall. 14. Lay it therefore in your hearts, that you premeditate not what ye shall answer. 15. For I will giue you a mouth & wisdom, where against all your aduersaries shall not be able to speake nor resist.

16. Yea, ye shall be betrayed also of your parents, & of your brethren, and kinsmen & friends, & some of you shall they put to death.

17. And ye shall be hated of all men for my names sake.

18. Yet there shall not one haire of your heads perish.

19. By your patience possesse your soules,

9. Then shall they deliuer you vnto be afflicted. Nowe Christ foretelleteth his disciples of an other kinde of temptation, wherewith besides their common afflictions, their faith should be tried: for they should be hated and detested of all the worlde. This is hard and sharpe of it selfe to the children of God, to be afflicted together with the reprobate and contemners of God, to be subiecte to the same punishment which they endure for their finnes. And this seemeth the more intollerable, to be sharpely oppressed with such grievous miseries, as the very wicked are free fro. But as the wheate, when it is together with the chaffe threshed out with the flailles, is afterward broken & ground in the mill: so God doth not only afflict his children together with the wicked, but layeth the crosse more vpon them then vpon others, that they might seeme to be the most miserable of all men. But Christe doth properly speake heere of the afflictions, which the disciples should suffer for the Gospell. For though that saying of Paule is true. Rom. 8. 29. whome GOD hath chosen, them hath hee also ordained to beare the crosse, that they might be made like to the image of his sonne: yet hee doth not marke all his children with this speciall marke, that they shoulde be persecuted by the enemies of the Gospell. Christ speaketh now of that kind of affliction, at that time when the faithfull of necessitie were to beare for the testimonie of the Gospell, the hatred, the reprochfull wordes and the fury of the wicked. For his will was to let his disciples vnderstande, that the doctrine of the Gospell (whereof they should be messengers and witnesses) should not be

bee accepted or allowed of the worlde, euen as hee hadde tolde them before. And hee telleth them before, that they shal haue contention not only with a few enemies, but that they shall bee hated of all nations, whether soeuer they shall come. But this was a wonder hardly to bee beleueed, which might make the most couragious mindes to feare and quake, that the name of the sonne of God should bee so infamous and odious that it should procure all them to bee hated euery where.

Therefore Marke sayth: *Take heede to your selues.* By which word hee noteth the ende and vse of this admonition: namely, that they should be readie to beare this, least this temptation should ouerthrow them before they be aware. Marke addeth in the same place, that this should bee a testimoniall to kings and rulers: when the disciples of Christ shoulde bee brought beefore their iudgement seate. Luke reporteth this somewhat otherwise. This shall be to you for a testimoniall: but the meaning is one with the former. For Christe declareth that his Gospell shall be the more set forth when it shall bee befended with the daunger of death. For if the Apostles should haue imployed their trauaile in preaching the Gospell, and should not stand constantly against the furious dealings of the enemies in defence of the same, it should not haue bene so notably confirmed. But when they doubted not to lay their heades in daunger, and that no terrours of death could driue them from their purpose, it appeared by this their courage and constancie, how certainly they were perswaded of the goodnes of their cause. So this was a sure seale of the Gospell, that the Apostles stood without feare at the iudgment seates of kings, and freely professed the name of Christ there. And therefore Peter calleth himselfe a witnesse of the pasions of Christ, the signes & tokens whereof he bare vpon him. And Paul to the Phil. 1: 17 glorieth that hee was set in defence of the Gospell. The which is especially worthy to bee noted, least they through vile cowardlinesse should fall away from the faith vpon whom God hath thought good to bestow so great honour, as that he would make them patrones of his truth.

MAR. 11. *Take yee no thought before.* We haue expounded this sentence & the text in the tenth chapter of Mathew, for that the Lordes will was to ease his disciples of that sorowfull doubtfulness, which hindereth vs from contineuing in our calling, while that wee distrust our selues as vnable to beare the burden. Not that hee would haue vs altogether carelesse (for nothing is more profitable for vs. then that wee bee taught humilitie by knowing our owne infirmitie, and be prouoked to prayers) but Christ teacheth vs to cast our cares into the bosome of the father, that trusting in his promised heple, we may goe forward cheerefully in our course.

But Luke setteth downe the promise otherwise, not that Christ would deliuer his from death (for this is not alwayes to bee hoped for) but that hee will giue them a mouth and wisdom, wherewith they shoulde make their enemies ashamed. But though Christ giue that at the same time a minde and power to speake, yet I doe thinke that hee meant another thing by ioyning these two wordes together: as if that Christ should promise, that hee would gouerne their tongues, so that they should answer wisely and to the purpose.

Hee addeth further, that this wisdom should haue the victory against

all their enemies : because they could not resist nor speake againste the same. Not that their impudencie should giue place to the truth: but because the truth, against the which they set themselves in vaine, should triumph over their franke boldnesse. And I would that all men that are required to make confession of their fayth, would repose themselves in this hope : for then the power and maiesty of the spirit would shew it selfe farre otherwise to the ouerthrow of Satthans ministers. Now while wee are caryed partly by our owne sence, and puffed vpp with pride, wee runne headlong rashly, or goe further forward then is meete: and partly we are withholden and restrained with peeuish fearefulness: and wofull experience sheweth that wee are destitute of the grace of God and helpe of his spirite. Further, when in Matthew and Marke Christ calleth it the spirite of the father, which speaketh in vs, and sayeth here that he himselfe will giue vs a mouth: we doe gather that it is proper and peculiar to him to direct vs by the spirit.

L V K E. 19. *By your patience possesse your soules.* Christ doth here teach his disciples a farre other way to preserve life, then the reason of manne would teach. For euery man doth naturally desire to keepe his life in safety : and wee doe all seeke for those meanes of preservation which we thinke to be best, and wee flee from all danger to be short, we seeme not to liue, except we be well garded. And Christ giueth vs this counsell for our life, that we should walke through fire, water, & swordes alwayes in daunger of death. And truely no man comitteth his spirite rightly into the hand of God, but hee which is alwayes ready to die, and learneth euery day to liue. In summe Christ commandeth vs to possesse our life both vnder the crosse, and amongst the continual terrors of death.

M A T. 10. *And then shall many be offended.* Now he recheiseth the temptations which shall come by euill examples. And this is very grievous & hard to overcome, when Christ himselfe should be a stone of offence to many, where at some should stumble, or others at the sight thereof should goe backward, and others doe fall away, **1. Peter 2. 7. 8.** And it seemeth to me that Christ in this word comprehendeth diuers kindes of troubles : because they doe not onely fall away which were entred into a right course, but many become enemies to christ: others forgetting modesty and equity, become raging madde, others become prophane men, & cast of all sence and feeling of godlines: others do take themselves liberty in such troubles to commit sinne.

11. *Many false Prophetes shall arise.* This admonition differeth from the former, where Christe sayeth before, that many should come in his name. For there he speaketh only of the deceiuers, which shortly after the entrance of the gospell, should faine themselves to be Christes. But now he saith that there should false teachers arise, which should corrupt the second doctrine with errors: as Peter teacheth that the church should be in no lesse danger of this mischief vnder the gospel, then it was before vnder the law, **2. Pet. 2. 1.** wherefore there is no cause, why errors & the subtil practises of sathan, & the corruptions of godlines, should ouerthrow the minds of the godly: because that no man is rightly established in Christ, but he which hath learned to stand against such assaults. For this is a right tryall of our fayth, when it standeth without remouing, against such false doctrines as shall arise,

And hee doeth not onely say that false Prophetes shall come, But also that they shall bee so subtil as to deceiue, so as they shall drawe sectes after them. And heere we haue neede to take great heede : because the multitude of them which follow errors, doe as a violent storme enforce vs to turne our course, if we be not thoroughly seiled in God : whereof there is somewhat spoken before.

12. *Because that iniquitie shall abound.* No man should bee ignorant how farre and wide this mischief should spreade it selfe : but very few doe marke it. For sith the light of the Gospell doth more plainly discover the malice of men, the desire to doe well waxeth colde, and is almost quenched euen in good and well minded menne. For euery man thinketh with himselfe that those things are lost, which are done for this or that man, for that experience and daily vs declareth that all men almost are vnthankfull, or faithlesse, or wicked. Truly a great and dangerous temptation. For what can bee more absurd, then to allow of that doctrine which seemeth to ouerthrow the loue of godlinesse and the force of charity ? But where the Gospell taketh place, charity, with the heate whereof the hearts of all men should be enflamed, rather waxeth colde. But the fountaine of this mischief must be noted, which Christ vttereth thus. For many do waxe faint, because that for weakenesse they cannot stand in the flood of iniquity, which floweth euery where, Christ then requireth his disciples to bee thus strong, as they may stand fast in these wrastlings. As Paule commandeth 2. Thes. 3. 13 that we should not bee weary of behauing our selues louingly and kindly. Therefore, though the loue of many being ouerwhelmed with the abundance of sinnes, should waxe cold, Christ sayth that this let must also be ouercome, least that the faithfull for such euill examples should giue ouer as men tired. Therefore hee rehearseth that sentence, that no man can be saued, but hee which shall strue lawfully, and shall continue to the end.

14. *And the Gospel of the kingdom shall be preached.* When the Lord had preached such a Sermon as had giuen no small occasion of sorrow, this consolation was added in very good time, either for the raising vp of the mindes ouerthrowne, or for the strengthening and staying of them that are falling : for whatsoeuer sathan shall denise, and how many stirres soeuer he shall make, yet the Gospel shall goe forward, until it be spread through the whole world. And though this was incredible, yet it behoued the Apostles, hauing this warrant of their maister, to hope wel beyond hope, & with courage to go forward to discharg their calling. Some doe obiect the Antipodes, and other people which doe dwell farre away, which as yet haue heard nothing of Christ, but it is easily answered. For Christ doeth neither note all the particular partes of the worlde, neither doeth hee appoynt any certaine time : but onely sayeth that the Gospell (which all men thought should bee speedily banished out of Iudea the proper dwelling place) should be spread to the furthest parts of the round world, before the last day of his coming. Hee declareth also the ende of preaching, that it may bee for a testimoniall to all nations. For though God neuer left himselfe without witness, Act. 14. 17. and gaue very speciall testimony to the Tewes of himselfe, yet hee gaue a testimony in this more notable then al the rest, when he reuealed himselfe in his christ and

and therefore Paule sayeth 1. Tim. 2. 6. that he reuealed himselfe in due time, because this was the time appoynted to call all the world to God Therefore we must learne, that so ofte as the Gospell is preached, God appeareth as it were openlye, and he directeth vs by this solemne & lawfull course, that we should not wander in darkenesse we know not whether: and that they which refuse to obey, should be without excuse.

Then shall the ende come. Some do vnaptly apply this to the destruction of the Temple & to the ouerthrow of the maner of worship appoynted by the lawe, which should be vnderstoode of the ende, and the renewing of the world. For because the disciples had ioyned those two together, as if the temple could not be ouerthrowne without the destruction of the whole world, Christ answereth to the question proposed, and telleth them that there is a long and sorrowfull time of troubles at hand and that they should not hast to the price before they had gone through many conflicts and troubles. Therefore this last clause must be vnderstode thus: The end of this worlde shall not come before that I will exercise my Church with sharpe and painfull temptations, For he opposeth himselfe against that vaine imagination, which the Apostles had conceiued amongst themselves. Wherefore it must be againe considered, that there is not any certaine day appoynted, as if that the last day should presently follow, the performance of those things which he foretold euen now. For al those things wherof we haue read before, the faithfull haue tasted long agoe, but Christe is not yet appeared. But he had no other purpose, but to teach his Apostles long sufferance, which too hastily speeded to the heavenly glory: as if hee should haue sayd, that their redemption was not so neare at hand as they imagined, but that there should be many crooked turnings before.

Math. 24.

Marke 13.

Luke. 21.

15. When yee therefore shall see the abhominacion of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing in the holy the place, (lette him that readeth, consider it) 16. Then let the which be in Iudea, flee into the mountains, 17. Let him which is on the house top, not come downe to fetch any thing out of his house. 18. And he that is in the field, let not him returne back to fetch his clothes, 19. And woe shalbe to them that are with child, & to the that giue sucke in those daies 20. But pray that your flight be not in the winter, neither one the sabboth day.

21. For

14. Moreover, when ye shall see the abhominacion of desolation spoken of by Daniel the prophet, standing where it ought not, (let him that readeth, consider it) then let them that bee in Iudea, flee into the mountaines, 15. And let him that is upon the house, not come downe into the house neither enter therein, to fetch any thinge out of his house 16. And let him that is in the field, not turne backe againe vnto the things which he lefte behinde him, to take his clothes, 17. Then woe shall be to them that are with childe and to them

20. And when you see Ierusalem besieged with soldours, then vnderstande that the desolation there of is neare. 21. Then let them which are in Iudca, flee to the mountaines: and let them which are in the middes thereof depart out: and let not them that are in the countrey, enter therein. 22. For these be the daies of vengeance, to fulfill all things that are written. 23. But woe be to them that be with childe, and to them that giue sucke in those daies: for there shall be great distresse in this lād and

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21. For there shall be great tribulation, such as was not from the beginning of the world to this time, nor shall be.

22. And except those dayes should be shortened, there should no flesh be saved: but for the electes sake those dayes shall be shortened.

23. Then if any man shall say vnto you: Lo here is Christ, or there, beleeue it not.

24. For there shall arise false Christs and false prophets, & shall shew great signes and wonders, so that if it were possible they should deceiue the very elect.

25. Behold, I haue tolde you before. Wherefore if they shal say vnto you: behold he is in the desert, goe not forth: behold hee is in the secret places, beleeue it not.

26. For as the lightening cometh out of the East, and shineth into the West, so shall also the coming of the sonne of man be.

27. For where soeuer a dead carkeasse is, thither wil the Eagles resort.

them that giue sucke in those dayes.

18 pray therefore that your flight bee not in winter.

19. For there shall bee in those days such tribulation, as was not from the beginning of the creation whiche God created vnto this time, neither shall be.

20. And except that the Lord had shortened those dayes, no flesh should be saved: but for the electes sake which hee hath chosen, hee hath shortened those dayes.

21. Then, if any man say vnto you, lo here is Christ or loe he is there, beleeue it not.

22. For false Christs shall rise, and false prophets, & shall shew signes and wonders, to deceiue if it were possible, the very electe.

23. But take ye heede, behold, I haue shewed you all things before.

& wrath ouer this people.

24. And they shall fall on the edge of the sword, and shalbe led captiue into all nations, & Ierusalem shal be troden vnder foot of the Gentiles, vntil the time of the Gentiles be fulfilled.

Luke 17.

22. And hee sayde vnto his disciples, the daies will come, when ye shall desire to see one of the dayes of the son of man, & ye shall not see it. 23. Then they shal say to you, behold hee is or behold there: but go not thither, neyther followe him. 24. For as the lightening that lighteneth out of the one part vnder heauen, so shal the son of man be in his day.

25. But first muste hee suffer many things, and bee reproofed of this generation.

15. When yee therefore shall see the abomination. Because it was a thing incredible (as I sayde euen now) that the Temple and the citie of Ierusalem should bee ouerthrowne, and that the whole common wealth of the Iewes should be destroyed, and also for that it might seeme absurd, that the Disciples could nor otherwile be saved but by separating themselves from that people, with whom the adoption and the couenant of eternall life was layde vppon as it were in pledge: Christ confirmeth both the one and the other by the testimonie of Daniel. As if hee shoulde haue sayde, settle your selues neyther vppon the Temple, nor ceremonies of the law, for God hath brought them to an ende: and hath declared before, that when the redeemer shoulde come, the sacrifices should cease: neither let it trouble you to be seprated from your nation, God hath also in time foretold his children of the casting away of this nation. Also such forewarning auailth out onely to take away the occasion of offence, but also to comfort the minds of the godly, & they knowing that God beholdeth them in extreme miseries, and regardeth their saluation might flee to that holy anker, whereby amongst most cruel stormes they may haue a sure and safe roade. But before I goe any further, this place which Christe citeth, must be examined. First it is certaine that the Angel in the 8. chapter. doeth not directly

directly speake of the latter destruction, whereof Christ maketh mention in this place, but of a temporall spoyle, which that tyrante Antiochus made. But a little after, as well in the 9. as in the 12. the Angell foretelleth the ende, and as they call it the abrogation of the ceremonies of the lawe, which shoulde bee performed at the comming of Christ. For after that he had exhorted the faithfull, to continue constant without yeelding, and hadde tolde before that the comming of Christ should put an end to the ceremonies, and hadde giuen the outwarde prophaning of the temple for a signe to them, at the length he appointeth in the 12. chapter a certaine time as well for the destruction as for the restoring. From the time (sayth he) that the daily sacrifice shall be taken away, and the abomination of desolation set vp, there shall bee a thousand two hundred and ninety dayes. Blessed is he that waiteth, and commeth to the thousand, three hundred & sixe and thirty dayes. I know that this place is diuersly wrested, because of the hardnesse of it: but I thinke that this is the simple meaning of it, after that the Angel had declared that the temple should be once purged from the pollutions and idoles which Antiochus had brought in, he saith that there shall a time come againe, when it shall be prophaned a new, & it shall loose forever all the holinesse and reuerence it hadde without hope of restitution. And because this was a grievous and sorrowfull message, he calleth the Prophet backe againe to one yeare, and two yeares and sixe moneths. In which woordes there is noted as well the long continuance, as the end of euilles. For the compasse of a yeere seemeth a long time to bee in continuall sorrowes, but when that time is doubled, the sorrowe encreaseth much more. Therefore the spirite exhorteth the faithfull to prepare themselves to beare patiently not onely for the space of a whole yeare (that is for a long time): but that they should account to beare afflictions continually through many ages. Yet there is no small comfort in that halfe time: for though the afflictions should bee longe, yet the spirite declareth that they shall not bee for euer. First he spake thus, the calamitie of the Churh shall endure for a time, times, and halfe a time. But now hee reckoneth the three yeares and sixe moneth by dayes, that the faithfull might be the more strengthened by that long continuance of euils. For it is an ordinary matter for men in afflictions to account the time not by yeares or moneth, but by the severall dayes: because that one day with them is as a yeare. At the length he sayeth that they shall bee blessed, which shall endure to the ende of that time: that is, which with inuincible patience come to that goale or marke. Christ chuseth onely that which serueth for his purpose: namely, that the end of the sacrifices was at hand, & that abominatiō is placed in the temple, which is a signe of the last destruction. And because the Iewes settled themselves too much in their present estate, so as they would not attend to the prophesies, which spake before of the abolishing of the same, Christe taking them as it were by the eare, commaundeth them to read that place diligently, that they might learne that the Prophets gave euident testimony of that, which was so harde to them to bee beleued: except that any man had rather take this to be spoken by the Euangelist: but it is more probable that Christ continued his speech, wherein he exhorted his disciples to the more attentiuens. Abominatiō signifieth as much as a prophanatiō: for by this word is signified that

filthines which defileth or ouerthroweth the true worshippe of God.

And it is applyed to desolation, because it draweth with it the destruction of the temple and of the common wealth: as he hadde saide before in the 9 chap. that the pollution brought in by Antiochus, was as a signe that it shoulde bee destroyed for a time: for so do I interpret the word wing, or spreading abroad. And they are deceiued which thinke that the besieging of Ierusalem is noted by these woordes: neither doe Lukes wordes make any thing for that error, whose purpose was not to speake of that same, but of the other. For because that city had beene heretofore deliuered in the midst of the ruine, least the faithfull should hope for the like hereafter, Christ sayeth that it shall be destroyed as-soone as the enemies shall compass it about: because it shall be vtterly deprived of the helpe of God. Therefore the meaning is, that the successe of the warre shall not be doubtfull: for that city shall be destroyed, because it hadde wholly giuen it selfe to breake the law of God. Therefore it is added somewhat after, that it shall bee troden downe of the Gentiles: which saying signifieth the last destruction. Further, because it might seeme absurde that the Gentiles shoulde so haue their pleasure of the holy city, there is added a peculiar comfort in respect of the faithfull (which Daniel omitte, because he speakech to the whole body of the people) namely, that the Gentiles had only liberty for a time, vntill that their iniquitie shoulde waxe ripe, and that the vengeance which was layde vp for them, should come to light.

16. *Then lette them which be in Iudea.* After that Christ hath taught by the testimony of the Prophet, that the lezall maner of worship should bee extinguished immediately after the prophanation of the temple, hee addeth that there should hang ouer all Iudea such fearefull and horrible plagues, that nothing should be more to be desired, then to bee caryed farre away out of that country. And he sayeth withall, that they should come of such a sodaine, that they should scarce haue any time to flee away most speedily. For to this purpose doe these speeches belong. *Let him which is on the house toppe, not enter into his house. Let not him which is in the field, returne backe.* Least while they seeke to saue their goodes, they loose themselves. Also, *Woe be to them that are with childe, and giue sucke.* For they cannot be apt and ready for the flight. In like maner *Pray you that your flight be not in winter, nor on the Saboth day:* least that their religion, or the hardnes of the iourney, and the shortnes of the dayes should hinder and let them from fleeing speedily. Therefore Christes purpose was first to stirre vp his disciples, & to waken them that they should no more haue that imagination of a blessed estate & delight of an earthly kingdō: then he encourageth them, least they shuld fall away at these generall plagues. This was a sharpe warning, yet was it necessary in respect of their blockishnes and the huge greatnesse of the euils.

21. *For then shall bee great affliction.* Luke also sayeth, that it shall bee a day of reuengement and of wrath against that people, that what soeuer thinges are wrytten, might bee fulfilled. For when as the couenant of God was then broken through the obdurate malice of the people, it was meete that by a wonderfull change, the earth it selfe and the ayre shoulde bee shaken. And a more deadly plague coulde not haue lighted vpon the Iewes, then that the light of the heauenly doctrine beinge extinguished

amongst

amongst them, they were cast away from God. But (as necessitie required in so great hardnesse of heart) they are enforced to feele the plague of their casting off, by harde and sharpe whips. But this was the cause of so horrible vengeance, that the desperate wickednesse of that nation was now come to the full measure. For the medicine which was layde to their diseases, was not only proudly disdained, but they also reiected the same most reproachfully: yea, as madde men or people distraught, they raged cruelly against the Phisition himselfe. But sith the Lorde reuenged so seuerely vpon them that obstinate contempt of the Gospell together with their raging madnes, let their plague be alwayes before our eyes, and lette vs learne thereby, that there is nothing more intollerable to God, then the disdainfull contempt of his grace. And though the same rewarde remaineth for the like contemptners of the Gospell, yet GOD woulde haue a more notable example remaine of the Iewes then of any others, that the glory of the comming of Christ might be the more renowned amongst the posterities. For the haynousnes of the offence cannot bee expressed by any woordes, that they should be put to death the Sonne of God, the authour of life which was giuen vnto them from heauen. So when they had committed that most abhominable sacriledge, they ceased not by diuers & sundry other crimes to pull vpon themselues all the causes of their vtter destruction. Therefore Christ sayth that the like affliction shall not bee in the world after that: for as that one reiection of Christe, accompanied with so many circumstances of wicked rebellion and vnthankfulnesse, was more to bee detested then all the finnes of all ages: so also it was meete that it should be more sharply reuenged then all the rest.

22. And except those dayes should be shortned. He amplifieth the greatnes of those calamities, and yet hee addeth a comfort with it: Namely, that the name of the Iewes might bee extinguished, if the Lorde hadde not regarde of his electe, and hope not somewhat for their sake. And this place agreeth with that of Isaiah 1. 9. Except the Lorde had reserued to vs a small remnant, we shoulde haue bene as Sodome, and like vnto Gomorrah: for that vengeance of GOD which beset at the captiuitie of Babylon, should be fulfilled againe at the coming of Christ, as Paul witnesseth in the 9. chapter to the Romans and the 29. verse: yea, the more iniquity had then spread it selfe, the greater reuenge shoulde then light vpon them. Therefore Christ sayth, except God put an end to those euilles, the Iewes shall vtterly perish, so that not one of them shall remaine: but God maketh account of his gracious couenant, so that he will spare his electe, according to that other saying of Isaiah, 10 22. If my people Israel bee as the sand of the sea, the remnant of them shall onely be sau'd.

And this is a notable testimony of the iudgemēt of God, when he so afflicteth the visible church, that it may seeme to be vtterly destroyed: & yet that he might reserue some seed, he doth wonderfully deliuer his elect though they be but few in number from destruction, that they might beyonde all hope escape the gulfe of death. So are the hypocrites terrified, that they should not vnder the title and forme of the Church nourish a vaine hope, and imagine that they shoulde goe unpunished. Because the Lorde when hee deliuereth them to destruction,

will finde a meanes to preferue and deliuer his Church, and it bringeth greate comfort to the godly, that God will neuer so let loose the brydle of his wrath, but that hee will provide for their saluation. So in punishing of the Iewes his wrath burnt in most horrible manner: and yet beyond the hope of menne hee so grounded himselfe, least any of his electe should perish. And this was indeede a wonderfull myracle, that when saluation should come of the Iewes, God of a fewe dropes of a fountaine dryed vppe, made floudes to water the whole world. For (as they had procured the hatred of all the Gentiles against them) it wanted but little, but that in one day there shoulde haue beene a signe giuen, to slay them euery where. And it is not to be doubted, but that when many desired to haue murdered them, Titus was restrained by God, from arming by his allowance his souldiours, and others greedy enough to execute such a purpose. Therfore that Romane Emperour stayed then that last destruction of that whole nation, and this shortninge was for the preferuation of some seede. This must yet be noted, that he restrained the violence of his wrath for the electe sake. For why would he haue so fewe remaine of so great a multitude? and what cause hadde he to preferre these about the rest? Namely, for that his grace rested vpon that people which hee hadde adopted: and least his couenaut shoulde be made of none effecte, some were chosen and appointed by his eternall counsell to saluation. Therefore Paule Romans, 11. 5. assigneth his election of grace for the cause why of so great a people there was only a remnant. Then lette the merites of menne giue place when we are called to the mere good will and pleasure of God, that the difference betwene these and them, should not be in any other poynte, but that it is meete they should be saued which are chosen. And Marke that he might set forth the matter more plainly and expressely, addeth one word more, speaking thus. *For the electe sake which he hath chosen, he will shorten those dayes.* The participle might haue sufficed, but that hee would expressely declare, that God was not moued by any other causes why he should rather fauour these then those: but because he pleased to chuse and to establish in them whome he would saue, the secrete purpose of his grace. Yet it is demaunded how God for his electe sake moderated these calamities, and did not all together destroy the Iewes, when as many reprobate and many desperate lewde people were preferued. The answer is easie, parte of that nation was deliuered, that so hee might bring forth his elect which were mixed amongst them, as seede separated from the chaffe. Though both the reprobate and the electe were pertakeres of this temporall preferuation, yet because it profited not those, it is aptly ascribed to these: for that the wonderfull prouidence of God directed it for their preferuation.

23. *Then if any shall say vnto you.* Hee rehearseth againe that which hee hadde spoken of deceiuers, and not without a cause. For there was more danger like to come by this temptation, least miserable menne afflicted and troubled, beinge deceived by a falsetitle, shoulde in steade of Christe seeke after spirites, and for the helpe of GOD take holde of the sleighthes of the deuill. For when the Iewes were so hardly oppressed for contemninge their redemption and were to bee withdrawne from their infideli-

litie by such violent remedies, Sathan subtilly proposed new things for them to trust in, which might drawe them the further from God, And certainly there is nothing more dangerous, then when we want counsell in aduersities, vnder the pretence of the name of God to be deceiued with lies, which doe shutte vp the gate of repentance against vs, and encrease the darkenesse of infidelitie, and at the length doe cary vs headlong as menne amased without hope of recouerie to madnesse. So that in respecte of that great danger it was conuenient that the same should be rehearsed: and specially, sith Christ declareth that the false prophets shall be so thoroughly furnished to deceiue, as with signes and wonders, which shall amase the mindes of the simple. For sith that God doeth testifye the presence of his power by myracles, and are therefore seales of true doctrine, no maruaile if the deceiuers doe gette credite thereby. And in such manner of scorning, doeth God reuenge the vnthankfulness of menne, that they might beleue a lye, which refused the truth, and that they should be blinded more and more, which shute their eies at the light offered. And yet he trieth their constancy withall, which appeareth to be so much the better, while that no subtleties can ouerwhelme them. Further, sith the Lord sayeth that the Antichristes, and the fying prophets, shall be furnished with myracles, there is no cause why the papistes should vnder this pretence be so proud, or why we should bee afrayde of their glorious boasting. They confirme their superstitions by myracles: for the Sonne of God fortolde, that by such meanes the faith of many should be overthrowne Wherefore wise menne ought not to esteeme them so, as to account them sufficient of themselves to prooue this or that kinde of doctrine. If they except that by this meanes the myracles should be ouerthrowen and brought to nothing, whereby the authoritie aswell of the lawe as of the Gospell was established: I answer that there was a certaine marke of the spirit grauen in them, which should putte the faithfull out of all doubt and feare of erring: for so ofte as God doth showe forth hys power for the confirming of his children, he worketh not so confusedly, but that there shoulde appeare a manifest distinction to shew it free from all deceite.

Note, that the myracles do so confirme the doctrine, that the doctrine also doth so shyne forth, and it scattereth all the cloudes wherewith sathan darkneth the mindes of the simple. To bee shorte, if wee desire to auoide such subtleties let vs holde the signes and the doctrine so ioyned together as that they may not be separate.

24. So that if it were possible, they shoulde deceiue the very electe. Thys was added to make menne afraide, that the faithfull mighte the more carefully apply and bende them selues to beware. For where false prophets shoulde passe with such vnbrideled libertie, and should haue so great power given them to deceiue, it were an easie matter for them to entrappe in their guiles the secure and heedlesse people. Therefore Christ exhorteth and stirreth vpe his disciples to watche.

Further, hee telleth them also that there is no cause why they shoulde bee troubled at the newnesse of the matter, if they shoulde see many in every place caried into erreur, But as hee commaundeth hys to bee.
Sf. 4. careful

careful least Sathan circumuent them ere they be aware, so againe he giueth them great occasion for them to hope well, wherein they myght quiteely repose themselves while hee promiset them that vnder the defence & keeping of God, they should be safe against all the guiles of sathan. Therefore, though the estate of the godly be fraile and brittle yet they haue a sure pillar shewed them heere, whereupon they may rest: for it is not possible that they should fall away from saluation, which haue the son of God for their faithfull keeper, For they haue not such a strong defence of themselves, as may resist the assaultes of Sathan, but because they are Christes sheepe, whome no man can take out of his hand, Iohn 10. 28. And it must be noted that the strength and assurednesse of our saluation resteth not in vs but in the secret election of god For though our saluation is kept by faith (as 1. Pet. 1. 5. it is sayde) yet it behoueth vs to goe further, for wee are therefore safe because the father hath giuen vs to his sonne, and the sonne, sayeth that nothing shall perish which is committed to him.

25. *Beholde, I haue tolde you before.* Marke setteth downe the meaning of the Lord more fully. *But take yee heede beholde I haue shewed you all things before.* By which wordes we are taught, that they are without all excuse, which are ouerthrowne by those offences whereof Christ hath spoken before. For sith the wil of God should be a rule to vs, it is sufficient for vs, that we were warned in time before, that so it pleased him. Further when he called himselfe faithfull, and sayth that he will not suffer vs to be tempted farther then we shall be able to beare, 1st Cor. 10. 13. we shall neuer be without power to resist, so that slouthfulnesse nouriſhe not our infirmities.

26. *Behold he is in the desert.* Luke mixeth this speache with an other answer of Christ: for when the Pharisees asked him of the comming of the kingdom of God, he sayde that it shoulde not come with obseruation. It followeth in the text set downe by Luke, that he turned to the disciples, and sayde that those dayes shoulde come, when they shoulde see no more one day of the sonne of man. By which words his will was to forewarne vs to walke in the light lest the darknesse of the night shoulde ouertake vs. For this shoulde be a sharpe spur to them, to prouoke them to profite, so long as they enjoyed the presence of Christ, sith they heard that most grievous troubles were at hand.

It is not knowne whether Christ gaue his disciples twise warning of one thing. But I thinke it to be probable that when mention was made of the comming of the kingdom of G O D, Luke added these sentences which I haue here set downe though they were spoken at an other time, which is no rare matter with him as wee haue seene elsewhere. But because this place is through ignorance diuersly wrested, that the readers may haue the naturall vnderstanding of the same, they muste note the opposition betwene the secret places, and the open spreading of the kingdom of Christ farre and neare, and that of a sodain & vnlooked for, as is the comming of the lightning from the East to the West. For wee know that the false Christes (which was a greivable to the grosse and foolish ignorance of that nation) could haue gathered any powers into corners of the desert, or into denes, or into other secret places that might with a forcible and strong hande haue shaken off the power of the Romane Empire from them.

The fence thereof is, that whosoever gathereth his riches into a secret place, that he might by armes recover the liberty of that nation, doth falsely challenge himselfe to be Christ: for hee is sent to be the Redcemer, who should sodainly and vnlooked for spreade his grace into all the quarters of the worlde. But these two were contrary the one to the other, to shutte vpe the redemption in some corner, and to spread the same throughout the whole worlde. By this meanes were the Disciples taught not to seeke for the Redcemer any more in the secret places of Iudea: for hee woulde sodainely stretch the coastes of his kingdome euen to the vttermost endes of the earth. And this wonderfull speed in spreadinge the Gospell in so short a time through all the partes of the worlde, was a notable testimony of the power of God. For it could not be brought to passe by the witte of manne, that the light of the Gospell shoulde as the lighting affoone as it shineth, presently spread it selfe from the one end of the world to the other: and therefore Christe doth not without consideration commend his heavenly glory by this circumstance. Further, by this describing of the largesse of his kingdome, his will was to shew that the destruction of Iudea, could not be any hindraunce to him, but that he would raigne.

28. *Wheresoeuer a dead carcassee is.* The meaning is, by what shiftes soeuer Sathan shall endeouour to draw the children of God backe hether and thither, yet the holy band of vnitie resteth in Christe himselfe, wherewith it is meeete that they shoulde bee holden, which are bounde. For whence cometh this diuision or confusion, but because that many fall away from Christ, who is our onely stay and strength? Therefore heere is a prescribed meane howe to nourish this holy vnitie, least the falling into errors shoulde teare the body of the Church asunder: that is, if we continue fast setled in Christ. The which must bee noted dilligently: for Christe doeth not tye vs either to the supremacy of the seate of Rome, or to any other trifles: but by this knotte onely woulde hee tye his Church together, if that all from all places woulde looke to him, who is the onely head: wherof it followeth that whosoever do cleaue to him with a pure sayth, are out of daunger of schisme. Now let the Romanists goe and cry out that they are Schismatikes, which doe not suffer themselves to be alienated from Christ, that their sayth might be enthralled to a theefe.

The interpretation of the Papistes is too sottish, who take them, which are of that company, which professe one sayth: and the Eagles to bee allegorically expounded for sharpe and quicke sighted menne: when as it is euident that Christ hadde no other purpose, then to call the children of God vnto him, and to keepe them in him wheresoeuer they were disperfed. And hee doeth not heere call it simply a body, but a carcassee. And Christe attributeth nothinge to the Eagles, but that which agreeth to the rauens and vultures with vs, after the nature of the countrey, which we inhabite. Neither is there any firmenes in the fancy of others, who say that the death of Christ was so odoriferous, as that it allured the electe of God. For in my iudgement, the purpose of Christ was to reason from the lesse to the greater: if there is so great wisdom in birds, that many of them can come together out of places farre distant to one carcassee: it is a shame for the saythfull if they shoulde not come together to

the authour of life, who is their onely true foode.

Math. 14.

Marke. 13

Luke 21.

29. And immediately after the tribulations of those daies shall the Sunne be darkened, and the Moone shall not giue her light, and the Starres shall fall from heauen, and the powers of heauen shall be shaken.

30. And then shall appeare the signe of the son of man in heauen, and then shall all the kindreds of the earth mourne, & they shall see the son of man come in the cloudes of heauen with power and greates glory.

31. And hee shall sende his Angelles with a greates sounde of a trumpet, and they shall gather together his elect from the foure windes, and from the one ende of the hea-
uen.

24. Moreover in those daies after that tribulation the Sunn shall waxe darke, and the Moone, shall not giue her light.

25. And the starres of heauen shall fall and the powers which are in heauen shall shake.

26. And then shall they see the son of man comming in the cloudes with great power and glory,

27. And he shall then send his Angells and shall gather together his elect from the foure windes, & from the utmost parte of heauen.

25. Then there shall bee signes in the Sun, and in the moone and in the stars and vpon the earth trouble among the nations with perplexitie: the sea & the waters shall roare.

26. And mens hearts shall fayle them for feare and for looking after those things which shall come on the worlde: for the powers of heauen shall be shaken

27. And then shall they see the sonne of manne come in a cloude with power and greates glory.

28. And when these thinges beginne to come to passe, then looke vp, and lift vp your heads: for your redemption draweth neare.

Nowe Christ manifesteth his kingdome more fully, whereof hee was demaunded at the first: and promiseth that after they haue beene vexed with so many troubles, their redemption shall come at the time appointed. For in his answer hee specially bent to this, to strengthen and to make his Disciples of good comfort: least they shoulde faint in their mindes for those troublesome stirres. Therefore he doth not simply speake of his comming, but he vseth a propheticall kinde of speaking, and as euery man was specially bent, so contrarily it was necessary for him to abide a sharper kinde of temptation. For what could seeme more absurd, then to behold the kingdome of Christ, whereof the Prophets had so royally spoken, not only despised, but oppressed with the crosse, couered with many reproaches, and ouerwhelmed with all kinde of affliction? Could not that maiestie haue bene set vpon it, which might haue darkened the Sunne, Moone, and Starres, and shaken the whole estate of the world, and haue altered the vsuall course of nature? The Lord now answereth these temptations, saying, though these prophesies are not presently performed, yet at the length they shall be fulfilled. The meaning therefore is, that those things, which were spoken before of the wonderfull shaking of the earth and the heauen, must not be restrained to the beginning of the kingdome: for the Prophets spake of the whole course, euen to the comming to the goale.

Now

Nowe, when we conceiue the purpose of Christ, the woordes are easie to be vnderstood: namely that the heauen shall not presently bee darkened, but after that the Church shall haue abidden many afflictions. Nor that the glory and maiestie of his kingdome should appeare at the last comming of Christ: but because that hee deferred to that time the fulfilling of those thinges, which began to appeare after the resurrection, and whereof God had giuen his onely, some taste, that he might lead them the further in the way of hope and patience. After this manner Christe helde the mindes of the saythfull in suspence to the last day, least that they should thinke that the Prophetes had spoken in vaine of the restoring to come, because that it lay a long time ouerwhelmed vnder a thicke cloud of afflictions.

But some interpreters doe corruptly take the affliction of those dayes for the destruction of Ierusalem: when as it rather signifieth that vniuersall flood of all euilles, whereof Christe spake before. Further, hee perswadeth them by this argument to pacience, because that those afflictions shall haue at the length a happy and ioyfull end. As if he should haue sayde, so long as the Church shall bee in the worlde it shall bee a cloudy and a darke time: but as soone as those miseries shall come to an ende, a day shall come, wherein the glory and maiestie of the same shall appeare. But wee cannot imagine now how the Sunne shall bee darkened, but the successe shall shew it. He meaneth not that the starres shall fall indeede, but according to the imagination of men: and therefore Luke onely sayth: that there shall be signes in the Sunn, and the Moone, & in the starres.

The meaning thereof is, that the frame of the heauen shall bee so shaken, as that the Starres themselues shall be thought to fall. Luke also maketh report of the fearefull shaking of the Sea, so that men shall for feare and doubt become astonied. And the summe is, that the creatures both in heauen aboue, and on the earth below, shall be as cryers or preachers to cite men to appeare at that fearefull iudgement seate, in contempt wherof they shall most wickedly liue in wantonnes euen to the last day.

30. *Then shall appeare the signe of the sonne of man* Christ by this word doeth put a more manifest difference betweene the present estate of his kingdome, & the glory there of, which was to come. For he seemeth after a maner to graunte that the maiestie of Christ cannot be scene plainly through the cloud of afflictions, neither can men feele the redemption which he offereth them. For the confused estate of things which we do now behold, partly darkeneth our minds, partly ouerwhelmeth the grace of Christ, and causeth it as it were to vanish out of our eyes, at the least that the sence of the flesh should not take hold of the salvation, which he hath obtained.

Therefore hee sayeth that hee will shewe himselfe plainly at his last comming, fully furnished with the power of heauen, wherewith as with a banner sette vppe on high, hee will turne the eyes of all the worlde vnto him. But because he sawe the greater parte of menne contemne his doctrine, and sette againste his kingdome, hee sayeth withall, that all people shall sorrowe and lament: because that it is meete that

he

hee should breake those rebels in peeces, and destroy them which despised his power when he was absent. And he speaketh this, partly that hee might by terrifying the proude and disobedient drawe them to repentance: partly also that he might strengthen the mindes of his children in so crooked dealings of the world. For the securitie of the wicked is no small occasion of offence: because they seeme to haue God in derision, and yet escape vnpunished. Further, nothing is more dangerous then to bee caught in the bayghtes of prosperity, which they enioy, and so driue vs from all reuerence of God, Therefore, least the faithfull shoulde enuie at the drunken mirth of the wicked, Christe sayeth, that their ioy shall bee turned at the length into weeping and gnashing of teeth. And in my iudgement hee alludeth to the 12. Chap. of the Prophet Zachariah, the 11. verse, where God declaring that there is a notable example of his iudgement at hand, sayeth that all families shall lament, as a man mourneth at the buriall of his onely Sonne. Wherefore there is no cause why any man shoulde looke for the conuersion of the worlde: for they shall feele at the length him, whom they haue pearced through, but it shall be too late, and without any profit to them. Then followeth the declaration of that signe, that they shall see the Sonne of manne comming in the cloudes, who then liued vppon the earth in the estate of a despised seruaunt. And by this meanes he declareth that the glory of his kingdome is heauenly and not earthly, as the Disciples had falsely imagined.

31. *And hee shall send his Angels.* He describeth the maner of that his power by this, that hee will send his Angels, who shall gather his electe from the utmost coastes of the world. For the highest heauen doth signifie the farthest region. But Christ speaketh hyperbolically, to teach his electe, that though they should bee taken out of the earth and cast headlong through the aire, yet they shall be gathered together againe, that they may liue vnder their head in life euerlasting, and enioy the enheritance which they haue hoped for. For the purpose of Christ was to comfort his disciples, least the great affliction of the Church should dismaye them. Wherefore so oft as wee see the Church eyther molested by the subtilty of Sathan or torne asunder by the crueltie of the wicked, or troubled by false doctrines, or tossed with stormes, let vs learne to looke to this gathering together. And if this seeme incredible to vs let the power of the angelles helpe vs, which Christ dooth therefore propose to lift vs vp aboue all meanes that man can yelde. For though the Church through the malice of men is now vexed, and is diuerse times driuen to flight, and banished, and being tossed with the waues is bruised, and miserably torne asunder, and hath nothing certaine in the world, yet we must bee of good courage: for the Lord will gather it together, not by the helpe of manne, but with an heauenly power, which cannot by any meanes bee hindered.

LV. 28. *And when these things shall beginne to come to passe.* Luke doth more evidently set downe that consolation, wherewith Christ maketh gladd the heartes of his Disciples. For though this sentence hath nothing in it contrary to the wordes of Mathewe, which wee expounded euen now: yet hee sheweth more plainly to what ende it is sayde, that the Angelles shall come to gather the elect together. For it was necessary that the ioy of the
godly

godly should be opposed against the sorrow & trouble common to the world, and that the difference should be noted betweene them, and the reprobate, least they should bee afraid of the coming of Christe. Wee know that the scripture doth not onely speake diuersly of the last iudgement, but of all things which the Lorde doth put dayly in practise, accordingly as he directeth his speech eitherto the faithfull or to the vnbeleeuers. What haue you to doe with the day of the Lord? (saith the Prophet Amos, 5. 18) that is a cloudy day of darkenes, and not of light, of sorrow, and not of ioy, of destruction, and not of saluation, contrariwise the prophet Zachary 9. 9. commandeth the daughters of Sion to reioyce for the coming of her king. And good cause why: for (as I. Ias. 3 5. 4. saith) that day which bringeth wrath & vengeance unto the reprobate, is a day of mercy and redemption to the faithful, Christ therefore declarcth that the light of ioy shall arise at his coming to his, so that as the wicked shalbe confounded with feare, so they shal reioice, because their saluation is neere. Therefore Paule. 1. Cor. 1. 7. giueth them this note, that they should watch for the day and coming of the Lord. For both their crowne and their full felicity and ioy is deferred, 2. Tim. 4. 8. Therefore it is here called the redēption, (as to the Rom 8. 22) because that we shal then truly and fully enioy that deliuerance which Christ hath obtained. Wherefore let our eares be ready open now to heare the sound of the Angelles trumpe, which shall not onely now be sounded to amaze the reprobate with the feare of death, but to call the electe to the second life: that is those whom the Lord quickneth with the voice of the Gospell, he calleth to enioy that life. For it is a signe of infidelity, to be afraid when the Sonne of G. O D is neere at hand to saue vs.

Mathewe 24.

Marke 13.

Luke 21.

32. Now learne the parable of the figge tree: when her bough is yet tender, and it bringeth forth leaues, yee know that sommer is neere.

33. So likewise yee, when ye see all these things, know that the kingdom of God is neere euen at the doores.

34. Verily I say vnto you this generation shall not passe, til all these things be done.

35. Heauen and earth shall passe away: but my word shall not passe away.

36. But of that day and houre knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heauen, neither the Sonne him selfe, saue the father.

32. Now learne a parable of the fig tree: when her bough is yet tender, & it bringeth forth leaues, yee know that sommer is neere.

29. So in like manner, when yee see these things come to passe, know that the kingdom of God is neere euen at the doores.

30. Verely, I say vnto you that this generation shall not passe, til all these things be done.

31. Heauen and earth shall passe away, but my wordes shall not passe away.

32. But of that day and houre knoweth no man, no, not the angels which are in heauen, neither the Sonne him selfe, saue the father.

29. And he spak to them a parable: beholde the fig tree, and all trees.

30. When they now see shoot forth, yee now seeing them, knowe of your owne selues, that sommer is then neere.

31. So likewise yee, when yee see these things come to passe, know ye that the kingdom of God is neere.

32. Verely I say vnto you this age shall not passe, til all these things be done.

33. Heauen and earth shall passe away, but my wordes shall not passe away.

I doe not know whether the signe mentioned is as euident a token that the comming of Christ is at hand in that troublesome estate, as wee doe certainly know that sommer is at hand, when the trees begin to waxe greene: but Christ in my iudgement meaneth some other thinge. For when as the trees nipe in together in winter by the force of the cold, and the hardnes beeing dissolued in the spring, they seeme to be more brittle, and doe also open that the young boughes may haue passage: so the force and strength of the Church is nothing hindred, or weakened by afflictions, as man would iudge. For as the inward fappe spread through the bodie of the tree, after it waxeth tender, gathereth strength, and causeth that to spring which was almost dead: so the Lord restoreth his children fully from that corruption of the outward man. The summe is that men should not thinke that the Church should be destroyed by reason of the weake and frayle estate of the same, but they should rather hope for immortall glory, whereunto the Lord by the crosse and afflictions prepareth his. For that which Paul speaketh of the seuerall members, must bee fulfilled in the whole bodie: for if the outward man perish, yet the inward manne is renewed daily, 2. Corinthians 4. 16. But that which is more obscurely reported by Marhevv and Marke, *Know you that it is neare, euen at the doores*, is more plainly expounded by Luke, *that the kingdome of God is at hand*. And the kingdome of God is not to bee taken for the beginning of the same (as it is oft otherwhere) but for the full perfection of the same, and that according to their sense, whom Christ taught: For they did not apprehend the kingdome of God in the Gospel, in peace and ioy of faith, and in spirituall righteousnesse: but they sought for that blessed rest and glory, which was layd vppvnder hope, vntill that last day.

34. *This generation shall not passe*. Though Christe speaketh thus vniuersally, yet hee doth not generally meane all the miseries of the Church: but simply sayth, that before this one age shall passe, whatsoeuer he hath spoken, shall bee approoued by the successe. For within fiftie yeares the Cittie was destroyed, the Temple ouerthrowne, and the whole kingdome was miserably walled. The world in her pride listd vppe her selfe against God, it was also extreemely bent to ouerthrow the doctrine of saluation, false teachers arose, which peruerterd the sincere Gospel with their falsehoodes, religion was wonderfully shaken, and the whole company of the godly was miserably vexed. And though those euilles continued many ages after: yet Christ spake truly, that the faithfull shoulde beefore the ende of that one age feele indeede, and by true experience, howe true his prophesie was. For the Apostles suffered the same thinges, which wee see at this day. But it was not the purpose of Christe to promise his Disciples, that their calamities shoulde shortly haue an end: for so he should haue beene contrary to himselfe: (for hee sayde before that the ende was not yet:) but that hee might encouragethem to beare with patience, hee expressly sayde that it belonged to this their age. Therefore the meaning is, that this prophesie is not of euilles a farre off, which the posteritie shoulde see many ages after, but of those which doe now hang ouer them in greate abondance: so that there is no miserie,

ry, which that present age should not taste of. Yet the Lord heaping all kinde of miseries vpon one age, doth not free the posterities from them, but onely commandeth his disciples to prepare themselves constantly to beare all thinges.

35. *Heauen and earth shall passe.* That his wordes might be of the more credit, he proueth the certaintie of them by comparison: namely, that it is more certaine and sure then the frame of the whole worlde. But the interpreters doe diuersely expound this manner of speech. For some doe erre the paising of the heauen and earth to the last day, when the transitory estate of them shall bee abolished. Others do expound it thus, that the whole frame of the world shall perishe rather then that prophesie shoulde passe away, which wee hearde euen now.

But because that it is not to bee doubted, but that Christe purposed to moue the mindes of his Disciples to looke vpe aboute the worlde, I thinke that hee noteth the continuall alterations, which are scene in the worlde: as if hee shoulde haue sayde that his wordes must not be valued by the vncertaine and vnconstant estate of the worlde. For wee knowethat in the chaunge and alteration of the worlde howe readie our mindes are to bee carryed away. Therefore CHRIST forbiddeth his Disciples to bee carryed away with the fashion of the worlde, but to looke alofte as it were into the glacies of GODS providence, which hath foretolde what thinges shall come to passe. Yet there is very profitable doctrine to bee gathered out of this place, that our saluation, (because it is established vpon the promises of Christ) doeth not ebbe and flowe with the vnconstant worlde, but standeth sure: so also our faith must ascende vpe aboute the heauens and earth to Christ himselfe.

36. *But of that day and houre no manne knoweth, no not the Angels.* Christ meant by this sentence to holde the mindes of the faithfull in suspence, least in a vaine imagination they shoulde appoynt some certaine time for the last redemption. Wee knowe howe our witte doeth wander, and what a vaine desire wee haue to knowe more then becommeth vs. Christ also sawe that his Disciples hasted to tryumph before the time. Therefore hee woulde that the day of his coming should be so hoped for and desired, that yet no man should bee so bolde, as to aske when hee shoulde come. Also hee woulde that his Disciples should so walke in the light of faith, that they being vncertaine of the time, shoulde patiently waite for his appearaunce. Therefore wee must take heede that wee bee not more curious about the momentes and poyntes of times, then the Lord alloweth vs. For the cheife part of our wisdom consisteth in this, that we doe soberly keepe our selues within the limits of the word of God.

Further, that men shoulde not bee troubled, because they knowe not that day, Christ accompanieth the angels with them. For it were a point of too much pride and of wicked curiosity, for vs, which creepe vpon the earth to desire that more shoulde bee reuealed to vs, then is to the Angels which are in heauen.

Marke addeth *The Sonne of manne also, Yea hee were thrise and foure times,*

times made which could not be content with this ignorance, which the sonne of God himselfe refused not for our sake. But because that many thought this vnmeet for Christ, they endeoured to mollifie the hardnes of this speech with their comment. And it may bee that they were driuen to seeke this shift by the lewdnesse of the Arians, who by this place went about to proue that Christ is not true and onely God: therefore in their opinion Christ knew not the last day, because hee revealed it not vnto others. But sith it is plaine, that Christ and the Angels were ignorant of it alike, wee must seeke for a more apt exposition of the same, and before that I will set it down, I will briefly take away their obiections, which thinke it a reproach for the sonne of God, if it should be said that there were any ignorance in him. That which they doe object first, is easily answered. For wee know that the two natures in Christ were so ioyned in one person, that yet either of them had the propertie remaining to it selfe: and especially the Godhead gaue place, and shewed not it selfe, so oft as the humane nature wrought scuerally that which appertained thereunto, for the performance of the office of the Mediatour. Wherefore there was no absurditie in that, that Christ, who knew all things, was yet ignorant of something, according to the iudgement of man: for otherwise he could not haue beene subiect to sorrow & grife, and like vnto vs. And that which some do object is very absurd, that Christ could not be ignorant, because that it is a punishment for sinne. And first they doe trifle very fondly, when they say, that the ignorance of Angels came of sin: but they are as foolish in that other point, that they knowe not that Christ did therefore take our flesh vpon him, that he might beare vpon him the punishments due for our sinnes. And that Christ knew not as he was man the latter day, did no more derogate from his diuine nature, then that he was mortall. But I doubt not, but that he had regard to that office, which was inioyned him by the father, as before when he said, that it was not his office to place these or those at his right hand & his left. For as I expounded it there, he did not simply say that he had nothing to doe with that, but his meaning was, that hee was not sent by the Father with this commaundement, so long as hee was conuersant amongst mortall menne. So also doe I vnderstande this now, in respecte that hee came downe to vs to bee a Mediatour, vntill hee hadde discharged that office, hee hadde not that power giuen him, which hee tooke after that hee was risen againe: for then hee sayeth that power ouer all things was giuen vnto him.

Mathewe, 24.

Marke, 13

Luke, 17

37. But as the daies of Noe were, so likewise shall the coming of the sonne of man bee
38. For as in the daies before the flood, they did eate & drink marry and gaue in marriage, vnto the day that Noe entred into the Arke,

39. And

33. Take heed: watch and pray: for ye knowe not when the time is.

26. And as it was in the daies of Noe, so shall it be in the daies of the sonne of man.

27. They eate, they dranke, they married wines, and gaue in marriage vnto the day that Noe entred into the Arke and the flood came, and destroyed them all.

28. Likewise, also as it was in the dayes

39. And knew nothing till the flood came & tooke them all away: so shall also the comming of the sonne of manne be.

40. Then two men shall bee in the fieldes the one shall be receiued, the other shall be refused.

41. Two women shall be grinding at a mill the one shall be receiued, & the other shall be refused.

42. Wake therefore: for ye know not what houre your maiſter will come.

dayes of Lot: they eate, they dranke, they bought, they solde, they planted, they built:

29 But in the day that Lot went out of Sodome, it rained fire and brimstone from heauen, and destroyed them all.

30. After these examples: shall it bee in the day, when the sonne of man shall be reuealed.

31. At that day he that is upon the house, and his stuffe in the house, let him not come downe to take it out: and hee that is in the fielde like wife, let him not turne backe to that he left behind.

32. Remember Lots wife.

33. Who soeuer will seekes to saue his soule, shall loose it: and who soeuer shall loose it, shall gette it life.

34. I tell you, in that night there shall be two in one bed: the one shall bee receiued, and the other shall be left.

35. Two women shall be grinding together: the one shall be taken, and the other shall be left.

36. Two shall be in the field: one shall bee receiued, and an other shall bee left.

Luke 21.

34. Take heede to your selues, leaſt at any time your hartes be oppressed with surfeiting and drunkennes, and cares of this life, and leaſt that day come on you at vnwares.

35. For as a snare shall it come on all them, that dwell on the face of the whole earth.

36. Watch therefore and pray continually, that yee may bee counted woorthy to escape all these things that shall come to passe, and that yee may stand before the sonne of man.

37. As the dayes of Noe were. Though Christe did euen now holde the mindes of his Disciples in suspence, leaſt they shoulde bee too scrupulous in inquiring for the last day: yet leaſt they shoulde liue too carelesly in the pleasures of the worlde, hee exhorteth them nowe to watch. Therefore, his will was to holde them so vncertaine of his comming, that yet hee woulde haue them to watch for him dayly and euery moment. Further, that hee might shake slouth from them, and moue them to watch the better, hee

saith, that the end shall come suddenly, when the worlde shall be drowned in a beastly slothfulnesse: euen as in the dayes of Noe all nations were swallowed vpp, when they looked not for it, but gorged themselves in pleasure and delights. And shortly after the Sodomites when they wallowed in their own lusts, and feared nothing, were consumed with fire from heauen. Such the world shall be given so to securitie at the last day, there is no cause why the faithfull should frame themselves after the example of the common people. Now we vnderstand the purpose of Christ, the faithfull must continually watch, least they be suddenly ouerthrowne: because the day of the last iudgement shall come vpon them before it be thought of. Onely Luke maketh mention of Sodome and that in the 17. chapter, where, by occasion without regard of the time, hee rehearseth this speech of Christ. But there is no absurditie in it, that two Euangelistes hold themselves satisfied with one example, though Christ purposed two, especially sith it accorded in all poyntes, that all mankind was suddenly swallowed vpp, when they wallowed in idlenes and pleasure, a few onely excepted. And where he saith that men eate, drinke, make marriages, and applyed themselves to other worldly matters, when God destroyed the whole world with a flood, and Sodome with lighteninges: hee declareth by those wordes, that they were so occupied in the commodities and pleasures of this present life, as if that no change were to be feared. And though hee doth presently commaund his disciples to take heede of surfeiting and cares of this worlde, yet hee doth not in this place directly condemne the intemperancie of that time: but rather their stubbornesse, whereby it came to passe, that they carelessly despising the threatnings of God, tasted of that horrible destruction. Therefore when they promise themselves a durable estate, they stay not, but goe carelessly forwardes in their accustomed wayes. But this was not corrupt, or to be condemned of it self, to provide for their necessities, except they would oppose a grosse blockishnes against the iudgement of God, that they might runne blindly into all manner of sinne, as if there were no reuenge in heuene to reuenge it. So Christ doth now declare that the last age of the world shall be altogether blockish, so that it shall thinke vpon nothing but this present life, deferring their cares for a long time, continuing the wonted course of their life, as if the earth should continue in one estate. The similitudes are most apt: for if we set before our eyes what befell the beholding of the course of the world alwayes in one estate, shall not deceiue vs any more, to make vs beleue that the world shall stand for euer. For within three dayes after euery man possessed those things which he had in great quietnes, the earth was drowned with water, & five cities were consumed with fire.

39. *They knewe nothing, till the flood came.* The fountaine and cause of their ignorance was incredulitie, whiche hadde blinded their mindes: as the Apostle dooth againe declare to the Hebrewes. 11. 7. Noe by the eyes offaith sawe the secreete vengeance of GOD, when it was yet a farre off, so that hee speedily reuerenced the same. And Christ dooth heere compare Noe with the rest of the worlde, and Lot with the Sodomites: that the faithfull might learne to bee of good comfort, least they should wander with others to destruction. And it is to bee noted, that the reprobate wallowed

still.

still in their sinnes, because the Lorde did not vouchsafe in time conuenient to giue this profitable admonition to any other but his seruantes: not that the flood which was to come was kept altogether secreete from the inhabitantes of the earth: (for Noah by making of the Arke did sette a fearefull sight before their eyes about a hundred yeares:) but because that one man was especially admonished by an Oracle from heauen of the destruction that shoulde come vpon the whole world, and was comforted with the hope to be saued. Nowe though the report of the last iudgement is commonly spoken of, yet because that a few, which are taught of God, doe know that Christ shall come as a iudge in his due time, it is meete that they should be stirred vp with the singular benefite of God, & that their fences should be sharpened, least they should ouerwhelme themselves in that slouthfulnes, which floweth euery where. For Peter doth to this ende compare the Arke of Noah with our baptisme, because that a small company of men separated from the multitude was saued in the water, 1. Pet. 3. 20. Wherefore our soules must be ioyned to these few, if we desire to escape safe.

40. *Then two menne shall bee in the fieldes, the one shall bee receiued. Luke setteth downe some other sentence before hee spake of this: the first whereof, as Matthew noteth, belongeth to the destruction of Hierusalem, Hee that is vpon the house, lette him not come downe into his house to take his stuffe out: But it may be that Christ applyed the same wordes to diuers things. There followeth in Luke an admonition, that the disciples shoulde remember Lots wife: for that they should forget those things which are behinde them, and shoulde strue to come to the ende of that calling, which they haue from aboue. For therefore was Lots wife turned into a Pillar of salte, Gen. 19. 26. Because that she doubting that she was come out of the city in vaine, looked behind her, which was a distrust of the word of God. It is also probable that she was also drawne backe with the desire of her nest, wherein she had taken pleasant rest. Therefore sith God would that there should bee sette vpon her a lesson to bee learned for euery, the mindes must bee stedfast and constant in sayth, least through distrust they faynt in the midst of the course, then, they must bee framed to perseuerance, that they may bydde the pleasant baightes of this transitory life farewell, may willingly and gladly hast forwards to heauen. Also the third sentence which Luke addeth, that they should loose their soules, which would saue them, perswadeth the faithfull that the desire of this earthly life shoulde not hinder them, but that they should with courage hasten euen through the midst of many deathes to that saluation, which is laid vpon for them in heauen. And Christ doeth very aptly describe the frailty of this present life, when hee saith that the Zoogoneisthai, (that is, are begotten or engendred to life,) whē they are lost. For it is as much as if he should deny men life vpon the earth: because that the renowning of the world is the beginning of true & perfect life. Afterwards Luke addeth that which Mat. also hath, that men & women shall then bee separated, least those fellowshipes wherein men are mutually bounde ech to other in this world, shuld be any hinderace or stay vnto the godly. For it falleth out oft times that while some doe looke vpon others, none of them steppeth one foote forwards. Therefore that euery man might be freed, & at liberty from all lets, & might shift for himselfe with speede, Christ declareth that of two the one companion shall*

shall bee taken and the other refused : not that it is necessary, that whosoever are ioyned together, should be so separated (for a holy fellowship in holinesse, causeth an honest woman to ioyne with an honest man, and that children shuld follow the father :) but the purpose of Christ is onely to cut away all lettes, to exhort all to make speede, least that they which are now prest forward, shoulde in vaine waue for their fellowes. Luke addeth this sentence, *Wheresoever the bodie is, &c.* it may not be restrayned to the last day. But when the disciples asked this question, *Where Lord?* that is, how shall wee stand fast, when so many fall away, and remaine safe in so great stormes, and what place of defence shall we that are ioyned together hide our selues in. Christ (as it is reported by Matthew) sayeth, that he is the banner and standard of all assured vnitie, vnder the which all the children of God must be gathered.

42. *Watch therefore.* The exhortation sette downe by Luke is more plaine & more speciall, *Take heede least your heartes be oppressed with surfeiting and drunkennesse, and cares of this world.* And certainly hee which by living in temperately hath his senses overcome with meate and wine, can neuer lift vpe his minde to meditate vpon the heavenly life. But because that there is no pleasure of the flesh, which doth not make a man drunken, all they which would hasten to the kingdom of Christ must take diligent heed that they surfeit not with the world. By that one worde of watching in Matthew is noted that continuall diligence, which maketh vs to lift vp our mindes to heauen, while wee liue as straungers vpon earth.

In Marke the disciples are commaunded firste to looke least the destruction comme vpon them vnawares or carelesse : then they are commanded to watch : because that the mindes are made sluggish and sleepe, with diuers pleasures of the flesh, which creepe vpon them. Afterward there followeth an exhortation to prayers : for it is necessary to seeke for helpes other where, to ayde those infirmities. Luke reporteth the forme of the prayer. First, that God woulde vouchsafe to drawe vs out of so deepe and troublesome a Laborinth : then, that hee woulde place vs safe and sure in the presence of his sonne : and wee cannot bee placed there, except we escape an infinit number of deathes. But because it is not enough by escaping many daungers to passe ouer the course of this life, Christe noteth this as a principall matter, that we may stand before his iudgement seate.

Because yee know not the day. It is to be noted that the vncertaintie of the time of the coming of Christ (which maketh a great part of men slouthfull) shuld stirre vs vp to be more diligent in watching. For God of purpose would that it should be kept secret from vs, that we might neuer be carelesse, but watch continually. For what tryall should there be of fayth and patience, if the faythfull all their life wandering idly in their pleasures, shoulde for the space of three dayes before, prepare themselves to meete with Christ.

43. Of this be sure, that if the good man of the house knewe at what watche the theefe would come, he would surely watch & not suffer his house to be digged through.

44. Therefore be ye also ready: for in the houre that ye thinke not will the son of man come.

45. Who then is a faithfull seruant & wise, whom his maister hath made ruler ouer al his household to giue them meate in season?

46. Blessed is the seruant, whome his master, when hee commeth, shall find so doing

47. Verely I say vnto you, he shall make him ruler ouer all his goodes.

48. But if that euil seruant shall say in his hart my master dooth deferre his coming,

49. And beginne to smite his fellowes & to eat & to drinke with the drunken.
50. That seruantes maister will come in a day, when he looketh not for him and in an houre that he is not ware of.

51. And wil cut him off, & giue him his portion with hypocrites: there shall bee weeping and gnashing of teeth.

34. As a man going into a strang country & leaueh his house and giueth authority to his seruants and to euery man his worke and commaundeth the porter to watch.

35 Watch therefore, (for ye know not when the master of the house will come, at the euen, or at mid night, at the cack crowing, or at the dawning)

36. Least if he come suddenly he should find you sleeping.

37. And those things that I say vnto you, I say vnto all men, watch.

35. Let your loynes be girded about, and your lightes burning,

36. And ye your selues like vnto men that waite for their maister, when hee will retorne from the wedding, that when he cometh and knocketh, they may open to him immediately.

37. Blessed are those seruantes, whom the Lord when hee commeth shall finde waking: verely I say vnto you, hee will gird himselfe about, and make them to sit downe at table, and will come forth and serue them.

38. And if he come in the second watch, or come in the third watch, and shall find them so, blessed are those seruantes.

39. Now vnderstande this, that if the good man of the house had knowne at what houre the theefe would haue come he would haue watched, and would not haue suffered his house to be digged through.

40. Bee ye also prepared therefore: for the Sonne of man will come at an houre when ye thinke not.

41. Then Peter saide vnto him, master sellest thou this parable vnto vs, or euen to all.

42. And the Lord saide, who is a faithfull stewarde and wise, whome the maister shall make ruler ouer his household, to giue them their portion of meate in season?

43. Blessed is that seruant, whom his master when he commeth, shall finde so doing.

44. Of a truth I say vnto you, that he will make him ruler ouer all that he hath.

45. But if that seruant say in his hart, my master doeth defer his coming, and shall beginne to smite the seruantes, and maidens, and to eate and drinke, and to be drunken.
46. The maister of that seruant will come in a day, when he thinketh not, and at an houre when hee is not ware of, and will cut him off, and giue him his portion with the vnbelievers.

47. And that seruant that knew his maisters wil, and prepared not himselfe, neither did according to his will, shalbe beaten with many stripes.

48. But hee that knewe it not and yet did committe thinges worthy of stripes, shalbe beaten with few stripes: for vnto whome soeuer much is giuen, of him much shalbe required, and to whom men much commit the more of him will they aske.

49. I am come to put fire on the earth, and what is my desire, if it bee already kindled?

50. Not withstanding I must be baptised with a baptisme, and howe am I grieved, vntill it bee ended?

43. If the good man of the house knew. Luke doth not rehearse this saying of Christ in the same place that Mathew doth. And no meruaile: for in the 12. chapter hee gathering together the summe of the doctrine of many Sermons (as we haue shewde other where) hee setteth downe this parable also. Further, there is this general preface, that the disciples with their loynes girded and their lightes burning in their hands, shuld waite for their maister. The which sentence is aunswered with that parable which followeth a litle after in Mathew, of the wise Virgines and the foolish. But Christ doth aptly note in few wordes how the faythfull should passe as straungers through the world. For first he opposeth the girding of the loynes against slouthfulnes, and the burning lightes against the darkenes of ignorance. First therefore Christ commaundeth the disciples to be ready and prepared to take a iourney, that they should with speede passe through the earth, not seeking for a resting place any other where but in heauen. The warning is very profitable, for though the very prophane men can speake of the short & speedy course of the life of man yet we see how they rest & tye themselues vnto the earth, But god vouchsafeth, not the honor of children to any but to such as do acknowledge themselues to be straungers vpon earth, & are not only ready at all times to go forward, but also do continually go forward in the way to heauen. But now becausethey are compassed about with darkenes on euery side, so long as they liue in the world he furnished them with lightes as if they were to take a iourney in the night. So here is first commended a diligent speedines to perfourme the course: then, a certaine directiō on least the faithful wandring out of the way should weary themselues in vain for otherwise it were better to go faintly in the way, then rashly to runne in a blinde and vnknown way. That which he speaketh of the girding vp of the loines, is a phrase of speech taken of the common maner of the easterne people.

L V K E. 36. And yee your selues like vnto men. Hee vseth an other similitude, which Mathewe speaketh not of, but is shorter in this matter. For he compareth himselfe to a householder, who while hee feasteth merely at

marriages, or seeketh to be mery otherwhere from home, will yet haue his seruantes liue modestly and soberly at home, applying their lawfull labours, and continually waiting for his returne. Therefore though the sonne of God being taken vp into the blessed rest of heauen, should bee absent from vs: yet because he hath appointed euery manne his office, it were absurde for vs to sleepe in idlenes. Furthermore, because he promiseth to returne, it behooueth vs to stand in a readines to receiue him at all times, least hee should finde vs sleeping. For if a mortall man thinketh this due vnto him, that at what houre soeuer hee shall returne home, his seruantes shoulde bee ready to meete him, how much more lawfully doth the Lord require this of his, that they should bee sober and watch, alwayes waiting for his comming. And that hee might make them the willinge, he sayth that earthly maisters are so delighted with this readines of seruants, that they also will serue them: not that all maisters doe vse to doe thus, but because that this dooth sometimes fall out, that a maister, which is of a milde and a gentle nature, doeth admitte his seruantes to his owne table, as his fellowes. Yet it is demaunded, sith that the scripture doth euery where call vs the children of light, Ephesians. 5. 8. 1. Thessalonians 5. 5. and the Lord doeth also giue light vnto vs by his worde, that wee might walke as in the midst of the day, howe shoulde the Lorde compare our life to night watches? But the answere to this obiection is easily made by the woordes of Peter, who teacheth that the worde of God burneth as a shining light, so that we may see the way euen in a darke place, 2. Pet. 1. 19. Therefore both must be noted, that wee must take our journey through the obscure darkenesse of the worlde, and yet the light of the heavenly doctrine going before vs, wee are sure from wandring out of the way, especially sith Christ himselfe doeth the duty of the Sunne vnto vs.

MAT. 43. *Of this be sure.* Christ by an other similitude doth exhort his disciples to keepe dilligent watch. For if any man heareth of theeues wandring abroad in the night, feare and suspicion will not suffer him to sleepe. Therefore now sith we are admonished and expressely tolde of this before, that Christ shall come as a theefe, we must alwayes watch, least he finding vs sleeping, should ouerwhelme vs with the wicked. Our sluggishnes cannot bee excused, especially sith here is not onely to be feared the breaking downe of a wall, nor the losse of our riches, but a deadly wound to the destruction of our soule, if wee take not heede. The worde therefore bent to this purpose, that Christes warning shuld waken vs: for although the last iudgement bee long deferred, yet it hangeth ouer vs continually, therefore the time not knowne, nor the nearenes of the danger, it is absurd that we should become slouthfull.

45. *Who then is a faithfull seruant?* Luke reporteth this place more expressely, where Peters question is set downe, which was the occasion of a newe parable. For when Christ had declared that there was no time for them to be slouthfull, in that his dangerous comming as a theefe, Peter demaunded whether this doctrine was generall, or belonged onely to the twelue. For (as we haue seene in other places) the disciples were wont alwayes to thinke themselves euill dealt with, except they were exempted from the common sort of men, and preferred farre aboue all others.

Nowe, when they are taught that their estate, is but smally to bee desired, and hath little pleasure in it, as men amazed, they looke hither and thither. But the answer of Christe tendeth to this, if it be meete that euery one of the common sort shuld watch, it may not be suffered that the Apostles should be sleepe. Wherefore as Christ had generally exhorted his whole houtholde to watch for his comming : so now hee requireth that his chiefe seruantes should haue a singular care, which are therefore sette aboue others, that by their example they might shew others the way of sober attendance and sober temperance. In these woordes hee declareth that they had not an idle dignity bestowed vpon them, that they might haue liberty to follow their pleasures : but the greater degree of honour they were in, the greater burden was layde vpon them, and therefore hee teacheth them especially to shew their faythfulnesse and wisdom. Whosoeuer are called to honour, may hereby learne, that they are the more bounde, not onely to labour for a fashion : but to apply all their diligence and witte for the performance of their office. For when as it is sufficient for priuate seruantes to apply themselves to their priuate worke, it behooueth the stewardest to proceede further, for their office is to haue care of the whole houtholde. On the other side Christe vpbraideth their vnthankfulnesse, that being preferred aboue others, answer not their honour. For wherefore doth the Lord preferre them before others, but that in faithfulnessse and wisdom they should excell all men? All men are generally appoynted soberly and diligently to watch : but if the pastours should become slouthfull, that should be most vile and least to be excused. Afterwarde, hee also prouoketh them to be diligent for hope of rewarde.

48. *But if that euill seruant shall say.* Christ in these woordes doeth briefly declare, whereof these euill seruantes became so carelesse : namely while they trusting to the delaying of his comming, they doe willingly bring the darkenes vpon themselves : they imagine that the day of reckoning and accounte shall neuer come. Further, vnder pretence of the absence of Christe, they perswade themselves that they shall escape vnpunished. For it cannot bee but that the lookinge for him, howe ofte soeuer it befall vs, should shake off all sluggishnesse, and shoulde much more bridle wantonnesse, and keepe vs from being caryed into wantonnesse. And so there cannot be a more vehement and effectuall exhortation to moue, then the setting forth of that seuer iudgement sette, which no manne can escape. Wherefore that euery one of vs may diligently apply himselfe to watch in the performance of his callinge, and that hee may diligently and modestly keepe himselfe with in his bandes, lette vs thinke vpon the so daie comming of that high Lorde, in contempt whereof the reprobate doe reioyce. Christe doeth also note by the way, howe easie a matter it is for impudency to growe, when a man hauing shken off the bridle, hath cast himselfe headlong to sinne. For Christe doth not onely say that hee is a dissolute and wicked seruant, but such a one as frowardly behaueth himselfe to the troubling of the whole house, and wickedly abuseth the authority committed to him, executing cruelty vpon his fellow seruants, and wantonly wasting his maisters goodes not without his reproach. For their terrour he addeth also a punishment, and that not a common one : namely, because that such vnbridled wickednes, deserueth a greater punishment.

L. V. 47. *And that seruant.* There is great weight in this circumstance, which is onely added by Luke that if any manne shoulde wittingly and willingly contemne the Lorde, so, hee is worthy of the greater punishment. For the comparison of the greater and the lesse is made to this end, if the seruant which sinneth of ignorance escapeth not punishment, what shall become of that peruerse and disobedient seruant, who of sette purpose treadeth as it were his masters power vnder his fette. And it must be remembered, that they which are sette vpp to rule and gouerne the Church, sinne not of ignorance, but doe peruersly and wickedly defraud their Lorde. Yet hercof may this generall doctrine bee gathered, that it is a vaine shift for men, vnder the pretence of ignorance to free, themselves from guiltines. For if mortall manne do challenge this right vnto himselfe, that hee will examine his seruantes according to his owne will, least any thing be disorderly and confusedly done: how much more authority hath the Sonne of God, so that whosoever will serue him, shoulde carefully desire to be instructed in his commaundements? They may not vncertainly at their owne pleasure do what they will, but they must be wholly at his appoyntment, especially when as he commaundeth vs what must be done, and doth alwayes answer louingly to them that seeke vnto him. It is certaine that our ignorance is alwayes a companion of careless and grosse negligence. We see that this is but a vaine defence, that he is not to be blamed, who sinned of ignorance: when as the heavenly iudge sayeth the contrary: for though such faultes shall haue lesse punishment, yet they shall not goe altogether unpunished. But now if ignorance doth not excuse, how horrible a vengeance shall fall vpon them, which sinne of set purpose, and doe furiously runne headlonge against their owne conscience to prouoke God. Wherefore the more knowledge any man hath, so much the greater is his sinne, except that obedience doth follow his knowledge. Whereby it appeareth what a vile and vaine excuse they make, who refusing at this day the cleare light of the Gospell, doe maintaine their frowardnesse with the ignorance of the Fathers: as if that the shielde of ignorance were strong enough to beare of the iudgement of God. But graunt that the faultes of such offenders were spared, it were not equity that the same pardon should be graunted to them which sinne willingly, when as of purposed malice they rage against God.

48. *To whome soeuer much is giuen.* Christe teacheth by an other circumstance, that they which are chosen disciples shall be more grievously punished, if that neglecting their callinge, they shall wantonly giue themselves to all licentiousnesse: for the greater any manne is, so much the more he must thinke is committed vnto him, and of this condition, that in time to come hee must yelde an account. Wherefore the greater giftes any of vs hath, if as a field tyld with great charge, he yelde not aboundance of increase vnto the Lord, it shal cost him much either for his vnprofitable suppressing of that grace, or for the abusing of it prophanely.

49. *I am come to put fire on the earth.* It may bee easily gathered by this clause, that this was one of Christes last Sermones, and was not sette downe by Luke in the right time. But the meaning is, that Christe broughte greate trouble into the worlde, as if that heauen and earth shoulde

meete together. For the gospel is Metaphorically compared to fire, because that it doth violently alter the shew of things. Therefore, whereas the Apostles fallily imagined that the kingdome of heauen should come and take them while they were sleeping quietly, Christ setteth before them a terrible fire, wherewith the world must first be burnt. And because that now the beginnings did but then appear, Christ doth thereby encourage his disciples, because they should feele the present power of the Gospell. When (as sayeth he) the great stirres begin to waxe hot, you must not be afraid, but rather of good comfort therefore: and I reioyce to see this fruit of my labour. Now it behooueth all the ministers of the Gospell to apply this vnto theselues: that when the world is troubled, they should the diligentlier apply their calling. Further it is to be noted, that with the same fire of the doctrine (while it generally burneth euery thing,) the chaffe & stubble shall be consumed, and the gold and siluer purged.

50. *I must be baptised with a baptisme.* Christ by these words declareth that the last worke which remaineth for him to doe, is that hee should by his death consecrate the renewing of the world, for because that shaking wherof hee maketh mention, was fearefull, and that burning of mankind full of terrour, he presently declareth that the first frutes should be offered vpe in his owne person, least that it shoulde afterwarde seeme grieuous to his disciples, to beare any part of the same. He compareth death (as other where) to baptisme, because that the children of God, being by the death of the flesh swallowed vp for a time, they do shortly after rise againe to life, so that death is nothinge else but a passage through the midst of waters. And he sayeth that he is grieved vntill he be thus baptised, that thereby hee may moue euery one of vs after his example to be ready as well to beare the crosse as to suffer death. Not that any man can by nature desire death, or any alteration of the present estate: but because that wee see the celestiall glory and the blessed and immortall rest on the further side of the shoare, for the desire of the which thinges wee doe not onely die presently, but we are caried also with greedines thither, as sayth and hope do draw vs.

Matthew 25.

1. Then the kingdome of heauen shall bee likened vnto tenne virgins, which tooke their lampes, and went to meete the bridegrome.
2. And five of them were wise, and five foolish.
3. The foolish tooke their lampes, but tooke none oyle with them.
4. But the wise tooke oyle in their vesselles, with their lampes.
5. Nowe while the bridegrome taried long, all slumbled and slept.
6. And at midnight there was a cry made: Beholde, the bridegrome cometh: goe out to meete him.
7. Then all those virgins arose, and trimmed their lampes.

Mark.

Luke.

Lampes.

8. And the foolish saide to the wise: Give vs of your oyle, for our lampes are out.

9. But the wise answered saying: We feare least there will not bee enough for vs and you: but goe yee rather to them that sell, and buy for your selues.

10. And while they went to buy, the bridegrome came: and they that were ready, went in with him to the wedding, and the gate was shut.

11. Afterwardes came also the other virgins, saying, Lord, Lord, open to vs.

12. But he answered and said: Verely I say vnto you, I know you not.

13. Watch therefore, for yee knowe neither the day nor the houre, when the sonne of man will come.

Though this exhortation tendeth almost to the same ende that the former did, as it shall appeare by the conclusion, yet it is especially added to confirme the faithfull in perseuerance. The Lord knew how weake mans nature is: and that it commeth oft times to passe, that they doe not onely in long tract of time waxe faint, but with a sodaine loathsomnesse they fall away. That hee might cure this disease, he declareth that the disciples are not well furnished, except they be able to beare a long while. When as the ende of this parable is vnderstoode, there is no cause to trauaile much in small matters, which doe nothing appertaine to Christes meaning. Some doe much trouble themselues with the lampes, the vessells and the oyle: but the simple and naturall summe is, that it is not sufficient to vse an earnest diligence for a short time, except there bee a continuance in constancie without wearines. And Christe declareth this by a most apt similitude. Hee had exhorted his disciples a little before, to bee furnished with lights, that they might passe through obscure and darke places: but because that if oyle be not supplied, the match of the lampe doth by litle and litle waxe dry, and looseth the light, Christ sayth now that the faithfull haue need of a continuall supply of vertue, which may nourish the light which is kindled in their hearts: otherwise it will come to passe that their frowardnesse will fall away in the midst of the course.

1. *The kingdomes of heauen shall be likened.* By this title he meaneth the estate of the Church to come, which was gathered by the fauorable mercies of the Messias. And he vseth this so notable a testimony of set purpose, least the faithfull should deceiue themselues with a vwrong deuice of a blessed perfection. Further, hee boroweth this similitude of the common vse of life. For that was but a childish fantasie of Hierome and such others, which doe wrest this to the praise of virginittie: when as Christe had no other purpose, then to ease them of the greife of the wearinesse which might bee conceiued of the delay of his coming. Therefore hee sayth that hee required nothing of vs, but that which was wont to bee performed by friendes at solemne marriages. For it was an vniuersall custome that young and delicate maydens shouide for honour sake bring the Bridegrome into the Bride-chamber. But the summe of the parable tendeth:

deth to this, that it is not sufficient for vs to be once bent and ready to our calling, except wee endure to the ende.

2. *Fine of them were wise.* In the end of the former chapter the Lord especially willed the stewards to be wise: because it is meete that the greater burden any man beareth, and the harder matters hee dealeth in, the wiser hee should behaue himselfe. But now hee requireth that all the children of GOD should bee wise: least, by running forward without aduice, they shoulde cast themselues forth as a pray to Sathan. And hee appoynteth this kinde of wisdom, that they shoulde take care to furnish themselues with necessary helpes for the performance of the iourne of their life. For though the time is short, yet through the heat of our impatience, it seemeth to bee too long: also, our want is such, as hath neede of helpes euery moment.

5. *Now, while the bridegroome taried long.* That some wrest this sleeping into the worst part, as if the faithfull together with others, should giue theselues to slothfulness, and apply themselues to the vanities of the worlde, is far from the meaning of Christ, and the course of the parable. It were more probable to vnderstand it of death, which ceaseth vpon the faithfull before the comming of Christ, for we must not only waite for saluation now, but when we are dead and rest in Christe. Yet I doe more simply vnderstande it of the earthly affaires, wherein the faithfull are occupied of necessitie, so long as they dwell in the flesh. And though they should neuer forget the kingdome of God, yet the withdrawing of them by the affaires of this worlde, is not in vaine compared vnto sleepe. For they cannot bee so througly bent to meete with Christ, but that diuers cares doe eyther withdraw them, or make them slowe, or entangle them, whereby it commeth to passe, that waking, they are somewhat a sleepe.

As concerning the cry, I take it to bee spoken Metaphorically for the sodaine comming. For wee know that as oft as any newe or vnwonted thing commeth to passe, men vse commonly to bee troubled. The Lorde crieth vnto vs euery day, that hee will come vnto vs shortly: but then the whole frame of the world shall sound forth, and his fearefull Maiestie shall so fill the heauen and the earth, that it shall not onely waken them that are a sleepe, but shall bring forth the dead out of their graues.

8. *And the foolish sayd to the wise.* Their too late repentance is heere reproued, which feele not their wants, before the gate is shut against all remedies. For they are therefore condemned of folly, which provide not for themselues for a long time, because that they doe carelesly please themselues in their owne want, and they doe so passe the time wherein they should make their gaine, that they contemne the helpes which are offered them. Therefore, because they thinke not of getting oyle in time, Christ scorning their ouer late knowledg, declareth what punishments they shall receiue for their slothfulness namely, that they shall finde themselues empty and dry without fruite.

9. *Wee feare least there will not bee enough for vs and you.* Wee knowe that the Lorde doeth therefore bestow his giftes diuersly to euery manne, according to his proper measure, that they might mutually helpe each others, and bestow that in common, which is layd vpp with either of them, and by this means

meanes is nourished in the Church, the holy societie of the members of the same. But Christ noteth heere the time when the burdens being taken away, he will call them all to his iudgement seat, that euery manne may receiue according as he hath behaued himselfe in his body. Therefore he doeth rightly compare that portion of grace receiued and layde vppon with euery man, vnto provision made for one manne in a iourney, which will not serue sufficiently for moe. Furthermore, that which is presently added, *Go: yee, and buy for your selues.* is not an admonition but an vpbraiding, in this sense, you had a time to buy before, which you neglected: for then it was best to prouide oyle, but the want thereof now cannot be recovered. The Papistes doe very fondly gather hereof, that the gifte of perseverance is gotten by our owne power or industrie: for in the worde buying there is yet no price sette downe: as it doth euidently appeare by the Prophet Isaiahs, chap. 55. 1. Where the Lorde calling vs to buy, requireth no recompence, but sayeth that hee hath wine and milke in a readynesse, which he will giue freely. Therefore there is no other meanes of getting, then that wee should receiue by faith that which is offered vs. At the length it followeth that the gate of the kingdome of heauen is shute vp against all such as were euill prouided because they fainted in the midst of the course. Neither must we seeke here curiously, how Christe sayeth that the foolish virgines went to buy: for it signifieth nothing else but that all should be shut out of the kingdome of heauen, which should not bee ready at the very moment.

Mathew. 25.

Marke

Luke. 21.

31. And when the sonne of man cometh in his glory, and all the holy Angels with him, then shall he sit upon the throne of his glory.

32. And before him shall be gathered all nations, and hee shall separate them one from another, as a shepherd separateth the sheepe from the goates

33. And he shall sit the sheepe on his right hand, and the goates on the left.

34. Then shall the king say to them on his right hand: Come ye blessed of my father, inherit ye the kingdome prepared for you from the foundations of the world.

35. For I was an hungred, and yee gaue me meate: I thirsted, and yee gaue me drinke: I was a stranger, & yee lodged mee.

36. I was naked and yee clothed me, I was sicke and yee visited mee: I was in prison, and yee came vnto me.

37. Then shall the righteous answer him, saying: Lord when sawe wee thee an hungred, and fed thee? or a thirst, and gaue thee drinke?

38. And when sawe wee thee a stranger, and lodged thee? or naked, and clothed thee?

39. Or when sawe wee thee sicke or in prison, and came

37. Now in the daye time hee

taught in the temple, and at night, hee went out, and abode in the mount that is called the mount of Oliues.

38. And all the people came in the morning to him, to heare him in the temple.

came vnto thee.

40 And the king shall answer and say vnto them: Verely I say vnto you, in as much as ye haue done it vnto one of the least of these my brethren, ye haue done it vnto me.

41. Then shall he say vnto them on the left hand: Depart from me yee cursed, into euerlasting fire, which is prepared for the deuill and his angels.

42. For I was an hungred, and yee gaue me no meat: I thirsted, and yee gaue me no drinke.

43. I was a stranger and ye lodged me not: I was naked & ye clothed me not, sicke and in prison and ye visited me not.

44. Then shall they also answer him, saying: Lord when saw we thee an hungred or a thirst or a stranger, or naked or sicke or in prison and did not minister vnto thee?

45. Then shall he answer them, and say: Verely I say vnto you, in as much as you did it not to one of the leaste of these ye did it not to me.

46. And those shall go into euerlasting paine, and the righteous into life eternall.

Christ prosecuteth the same doctrine: and that which he first described by parables, he now expoundeth plainly and without figures. The summe is that the faithfull should stir vp themselves to the desire of liuing holily & righteously and that they should with the eyes of faith looke vp to the heauenly life, which now lieth hid, but shall be at the length reuealed at the last comming of Christ. For when he saith that he shall then sit in the throne of his glory, where he shall come with the angels, he opposeth this his last appearance, against the confused and disordered troubles of the earthly warfare: as if he should haue sayd, that he did not therefore appeare, as if that hee should haue set his kingdome presently in an order: and therefore his disciples haue neede of hope & patience, least the long delay should tire them out. Whereby we gather that this is added againe that the disciples being remoued from that error, of a present & sodaine felicity, should suspend their minds vntill the second comming of Christ: & in the meane season, that they should not fall away nor waxe faint: therefore he sayth that he shall then at length be renoued by the name of a king. For although he beginneth his kingdome vpon the earth, & sitteth now at the right hand of his father that he might with great authoritie gouerne heauen & earth: yet, that his throne is not as yet erected in the sight of men, so that his diuine maiestie shall far more fully appeare and shine in the last day then now. For then shall the full effect of his glory appeare, which we tast now onely by faith. Therefore Christ sitteth now in his throne in heauen, so far forth as it is necessary for him to raigne for the brideling of his enemies and the defence of his Church. But then he shall openly ascende into his tribunall seat, that hee may establish a perfecte order in heauen and earth, that he may tread his enemies vnder his feet, & þ he may gather his faithfull ones into the fellowship of the eternal & blessed life. to be short he will then shew forth in deed to what end his father hath giuen the kingdome to him. He saith that he wil then come in his glory because that while hee was

conuer-

uerfant vppon earth as a mortall man, hee lay hidde vnder the contemptible habite of a seruāt. And he calleth it his glory, which in another place he attributeth to his father euen in the same sence: for he simply meaneth the glory of GOD, which shone then onely in the father, when as it was hid in him.

32. *And before him shall be gathered all nations, and he shall separate them.* He extolleth his kingdome with greate and royall titles, that the Disciples might learne to hope for an other felicity, then they hadde then conceiued in their mindes. For this one thing sufficed them, that their nation should be deliuered from the miseries wherewith it was then oppressed, that it might appeare that God had not made his couenant in vaine with Abraham and his posterity. But Christ extendeth the fruite of the redemption which hee bringeth further, because that hee shall be the iudge of the whole world. Then, that hee might exhort the faithfull to liue godly, hee sayth that it shal not bee common both to good and badde: for he will bring with him the reward which is layde vppe for them both. In summe, he sayth that the estate of his kingdome shall then bee rightly ordred, when the righteous shall obtayne the crowne of glory, and the wicked shall haue that reward payed them which they haue deserued. Now that separation of the goates from the lambes which is deferred vnto that day, declareth that the wicked are now mingled with the holy and godly men to liue together in one, and the same flocke of God. And this comparison seemeth to bee taken out of Ezechiel 34. 21. where the Lord complaineth of the vntowardnesse of the goates, which push the leane sheepe with their hornes, and spoyle the pastures and trouble the water: and he sayth that he will reuenge it: So that Christ his wordes doetend to this, that the faithfull should not think their estat to be too sharp, if now they be compelled to liue with goates, yea, and to abide many pushes and troubles of them: then, that they should take heede, least the corruption of their sinnes should infect them also thirdly, that they might know that they loose not their labour by liuing godly and righteously, for the difference shall appeare at the length.

34. *Come yee blessed.* The purpose of Christ must be remembered: for hee willetth his disciples to be now content with hope, and patiently, and with quiet mindes to waite for the enioying of the celestiall kingdome: then hee willetth them to goe earnestly forward, and not to be weary of well doing. The latter part is referred to this, that he promisseth the inheritance of heauen to none, but to them which in good workes doe goe forward to the marke of that calling which is from aboue. But before that hee will speake of the rewarde of good works, he sheweth by the way that the spring of saluatiō ariseth from an higher fountaine. For by calling them the blessed of the father, he declareth that their saluation proceedeth of the free fauour of God: for the blessed of GOD, and chosen, or beloued of God, is all one amongst the Hebrewes. Further, not onely the faithfull haue vsed this phrase of speech, to expresse the grace of God towardes men, but they which had no tast of true godlinesse, held yet this principle. Come in thou blessed of the Lord, sayd Laban to Abraham his seruant Gen. 24. 31. Wee see that nature had taught them to vse this title, that they might thereby yelde the prayse of all good things which they had receiued, to God.

Wherefore it is not to be doubted, but that Christ describing the saluation of the godly beginneth at the loue of God, whereby they which by the direction of Gods spirit doe aspire to righteousness in this life, are predestinated to life. Hee vnto also appertaineth that which he sayth a litle after, that the kingdome was prepared for them from the beginning of the worlde, into the possession wher of they shall be sent at the last day. And though it may easily be objected that the rewarde was layd vp before for their merites which should come after, yet if any man will waigh the wordes without contention, hee will grant that it is a secret commendation of the grace of God. For Christ also doth not simply call the faithfull to possesse the kingdome, as if they haue gotten the same by their merites: but expressly sayth that it shoulde be giuen as to heires. Yet there is an other ende to bee noted, whereunto the Lord had regard, for though the life of the godly is nothing else but a miserable and greiuous banishment so that the earth can scarcely beare the: though they trauaile vnder a hard want, vnder proaches and other troubles, that they may with a strong and valiant minde ouercome these lets, the Lord declareth that there is a kingdome prepared for them in an other place, And it is a notable exhortation to patience, when men are certainly perswaded that they beare not in vaine. Therefore, least the pride of the wicked wherein they doe glory now, shoulde make our mindes to fainte, and least our owne miseries shoulde weaken our hope, let vs alwayes remember that inheritance which remaineth for vs in heauen: for it dependeth not of any doubtfull case, but it was prepared for vs of God beefore wee were borne, yea I say for euery one of the elect, because that Christ doeth heere call them the blessed of the father. But there is no absurditie in this, that it is onely sayd heere, that *the kingdome was prepared from the beginning of the world*, and in an other place: *Before the creation of the heauen and the earth*. For Christ doth not here set downe the point of time, when the inheritance of eternall life was prepared for the children of God, but onely calleth vs to the consideration of the fatherly care of God, wherein hee embraced vs before wee were borne: and he doth therby confirme the assurance of our hope, so that the troublesome stormes of the world cannot ouerthrow our life.

I was an hungred. If the disputation heere had beene of the cause of our saluation, the Papiests had not gathered amisse, that wee should merite eternall life by good workes, but when as Christ had no other purpose but to exhort his Disciples to endeavour to liue well and righteously, it is ill gathered by his wordes what the merites of workes should auaille. They rest vpon the worde causall, which is but a weake stay: for we know that it doth not alwayes note the cause, but rather the consequence, when as eternall life is promised to the righteous. But there is a playner answere. For we deny not but that there is a rewarde promised to good workes, but it is of fauour, because it dependeth of the adoption. Paule in the 2. Tim. 4. 8. reioyceth that there was a crowne of righteousness layd vppon for him. But whereof gathered hee this comfort, but of this, that hee was a member of Iesus Christe, who is the onely heire of the heauenly kingdome? Hee sayeth that the iust iudge will giue him that crowne, but howe shoulde hee come by that rewarde, but because hee was adopted of free grace, and endowed with that righteousness where-
of

whereof we all are voyde: Therefore these two things must be considered, that the saythfull are called to the possession of the kingdome of heauen, in respect of good workes, not because they shoulde deserue it by the righteousnesse of workes, or because that they shoulde be the authours of the getting of it for themselves: but because that God doeth iustifie them whome hee hath first chosen. Furthermore, though that by the direction of the spirite they shoulde aspire to the loue of righteousnesse: yet because they doe neuer satisfie the law of God, there is no rewarde due to them, but that is called a reward which is given freely. But Christe doth not reckon vppon all the partes of a godly and a holy life: but doth onely note for example sake some poyntes of charity, whereby we declare that we doe worshippe God. For though the worshippe of God excelleth the loue of menne, and therefore sayth and inuocation is more to be desired then almes: yet Christe doeth not without cause sette downe the testimonies of true righteousnesse which are more apparant to be seene. If any man despising God, should onely deale well with men, such mercy should nothing auale for the appeasing of God, because that in the meane season he is defrauded of his owne right. Christ therefore doeth not say that the sum of righteousnesse consisteth in almes, but by signes which may be most easily seene, hee declarereth what it is to liue godly and righteously: so that truely the faithfull do not onely professe with the mouth, but by dilligent exercises they doe shewe that they doe worshippe God. Wherefore those fantastick menne doe very preposterously vnder pretence of this place withdrawe themselves, both from the hearing of the word, and also from receiuing the holy supper. for vnder the same colour they might also cast away sayth & bearing of the crosse, and prayers and chastitie. But Christ ment nothing lesse, then to restraine to a part of the second table, the rule of holy life, which is contained in the two tables of the law. The Monkes also and such like rascalles haue sottishly sette downe to themselves fixe workes of mercy, because that Christ maketh mention of no mo. As if that children might not plainly see, that by the figure Synecdoche, all the woorkes of charity are here commended. For to comfort the sorrowfull, to helpe them that be vniustly oppressed: to ayde the simple with counsell, to pull the poore wretches out of the iawes of the wolues is a worke of mercy, as much worthy to be prayed, as to cloath the naked, or to feede the hungry. But may a man thinke, that Christe commending charity vnto vs, woulde exclude the duties which appertaine to the worship of God: yet he telleth his disciples, that this shal be a lawfull tryall of a holy life, if they exercise themselves in charity, according to that saying of the Prophet, I will haue mercy & not sacrifice, Hete 6.6. Namely, because that the hypocrites being couetous, cruell, deceitfull, snatching to them by violence, & proud, doe yet vnder a vaine pompe of ceremonies, dissemble a kinde of holines. Wherby we doe also gather, if wee desire to haue our life approued before the chiefe iudge, wee must not wander in our owne fantasies, but rather looke what he doth especially require of vs. For whosoever shall depart from his commandementes, although they sweate and tire out themselves in their fained woorkes, they shall yet at the length heare this at the last day: who required these thinges at your hand, Isa. 1. 12.

37. *Then shall they answer.* Christ bringeth in the righteous doubting, who yet

yet are not ignorant, but that he accounteth whatsoeuer is giuen to men, as bestowed vpon himselfe. But because that this is not so thoroughly settled in their mindes as was meete, therefore he setteth forth the same by raising the persons, as it were to speake it: for whereof commeth it, that we are so slow and slacke to doe well, but because that promise is not rightly settled in our heartes, that God will in time to come recompence with gaine, that which we bestow vpon the poore? So then this admiration which Christ setteth downe, tendeth to this purpose, to teach vs to arise about the capacitie of our flesh, so oft as our poore brethren doe craue our ayd & helpe, that the beholding of the miserable man, should not make vs slacke or slow, to doe well. 39. *Verily I say vnto you.* As Christ taught euen now by a figure, that wee doe not yet vnderstand, howe much he esteemeth the duties of charity: so now he openly declareth that hee accepteth as done to him, what things soeuer we bestow vpon his children, & will recompence them to vs. And we were too too carelesse, if this sentence could not frame our bowels to compassion, that christ is either neglected, or worshipped in their person which need our helpe. Therefore so oft as we doe wax slow to helpe the poore, let vs looke vpon the sonne of God, to whome if any thing should be denyed it were most cruell sacriledge. In these wordes he also declareth, that he also acknowledgeth those benefites as done to him, which were done freely without regard of any reward. And truly, when he comandeth to do good to the hungry and the naked, & strangers, and prisoners, of whom there can be no hope of recompence, it is necessary to looke to him, who of his owne accord bindeth himselfe vnto vs, & that which otherwise might seeme to be lost, he suffereth to be reckoned amongst his accounts. But hee doth here by name commend the faithfull only: not that he would that others should be altogether despised, but because that the nearer any man approacheth vnto God, so much the nearer he must be to vs. For though there is a common band of society, yet the children of God haue a more strong & sacred knor of fellowshiippe amongst themselves. Therefore sith it is meete to prefer them which are of the household of faith before straungers, Christ doth especially name them. And though the purpose was to perswade the rich, & them which haue abundance to supply & ease the want of the brethren: yet the poore & miserable haue no small comfort hereby, for that though they be reiecte, & despised of the world, yet they are as precious to the son of God as his owne members. And surely by calling the brethren, he vouchsafeth the a wonderful honor. 41. *Depart from me ye cursed.* Now he descendeth to the reprobate, who were so drunken with their transitory prosperity, that they dreamed that they should be alwayes blessed. Therefore he saith that he will come to bee their iudge, to shake away their pleasures wherein they are now drowned: Not that he would terrifie them with the tidings of his coming, (which seeme to haue made a couenant with death, & doe harden themselves in security) but that the faithfull being forewarned of their horrible destruction, might not enuy there present estate. For as promises are necessary for vs to prouoke and stirre vs vppe to desire to liue well: so likewise are the threatnings, to keepe vs in carefulnesse and feare. Therefore we are taught how much it is to bee desired to be ioyned to the sonne of God: because that eternall destruction and the torment of fire remaineth for them, whom hee reiecteth from him

at the last day. And then he will command the wicked to depart from him, because that many hypocrites are now so mixed among the iust, as if there were great affinitie betweene Christ and them. Further, wee haue sayd other where, that the word fire doth metaphorically set forth the sharpnes of the punishment which our senses cannot comprehend. Wherefore it is a vaine thing subtilly to inquire eyther of the matter, or of the forme of the fire, as the sophisters doe. For, so likewise should there be question had of the worme, which Esay. 66. 24. ioyneth with the fire. Furthermore, the same Prophet in the 30. 33. doth plainly declare that it is a metaphoricall kind of speech: for he compareth the spirite of God to a paire of bellowes, wherewith the fire is kindled, and hee addeth also brimstone. Wherefore by these wordes wee may rather imagine then know the vengeance of God which shall light vpon the wicked, which exceeding all other torments, may terrifie vs.

But heere is to bee noted the perpetuities of the fire, as of the glory which was promised euen now to the faithfull. *Which is prepared for the deuill.* Christ opposeth the deuill against himselfe, as the head and cheife of all the reprobate. For though all the Angels which sell, are deuils, yet many places of the Scripture do referre a chiefety to one, who gathereth all the wicked vnder him, as into one body to destruction: euen as the faithfull in life, become one together vnder Christ, and doe grow vnder him, vntill they become perfect, and are thoroughly knit to God by him. But Christ sayth now, that hell is prepared for the deuill, that the wicked might bee out of hope of escaping the same, when they heare that they are appoynted to the same punishment with the deuill, who as it is well knowne, is already enthalled and chained in hell without hope of deliuerance. And though some doe by the Angels of the deuill vnderstande wicked men, yet it is more probable that Christe speaketh onely of the deuils. And so in these words he doth secretly reprove menne, who being called by the Gospell to the hope of saluation, had rather perish with Sathan, and reiecting the authour of saluation, doe willingly cast themselues into this miserable lot. Not that they were not ordained to destruction as well as the deuill: but because that in their wickednesse the cause of their destruction doeth evidently appeare, while they refuse the grace calling them. Therefore though the reprobate were in the secret iudgement of God ordained to death before they were borne, yet so long as life is offered them, they are not accounted heires of death, or companions of Sathan: but their destruction which was hid before, appeareth & is discovered by their incredulitie.

44. *Then shall they answer.* The same figure of setting them to speake in their owne persons, which was vsed before, Christ doth now againe rehearse, to let the reprobate vnderstand, that those vaine pretences wherewith they do now deceiue themselues, shall auale them nothing at the last day. For, whence cometh this so cruell pride against the poore, but because they think that they shall escape vnpunished. Therefore the Lord, that he might driue away such deceitfull flatteries, forewarneth them that they shall feele at the length, (but to too late) that which they now doe not vouchsafe to thinke vpon: namely, that they which now doe seeme to bee such abiectes are as pretious to Christ, as his owne members.

Math. 26.

Marke. 14

Luke 22.

1. And it came to passe, when Iesus had finished all these sayings, he said vnto his disciples,

2. Ye know that within 2. dayes is the Passeouer, and the Son of man shal be deliuered to be crucified.

3. Then assembled together the chief Priests and the Scribes, and the Elders of the people into the hall of the high priest called Caiaphas,

4. And consulted how they might take him by subtilties, & kill him

5. But they said not on the feast day, lest any uproare be amonge the people.

6. And when Iesus was in Bethania in the house of Simon the leper,

7. There came vnto him a woman, which had a boxe of very costly oymment, & powred it on his head, as he sat at the table.

8. And when his disciples saw it they had indignation, saying what needed this wast?

9. For this oymment might haue been sold for muche and been giuen to the poore.

10. And Iesus knowing it, sayde vnto them: why trouble yee the woman? for she hath wrought a good worke vpon me.

11. For ye haue the poore alwayes with you but me shall you not haue alwayes.

12. For, in that shee powred this oymment on my body shee did it to bury me.

13. Perely I say vnto you: where-soeuer this Gospell shal be preached throughout al the world, there shall also this that shee hath done be spoken of, for a memoriall of her.

1. And two dayes after followed the feast of the Passeouer, and of unleuened bread: and the high Priests and Scribes sought howe they might take him by craft, and put him to death.

2. But they said: not on the feast day least there be any tumult among the people.

3. And when he was in Bethania in the house of Symon the Leaper, as hee sate at the Table, there came a woman hauing a boxe of oymment of Spikenard, very costly and shee brake the boxe, and powred it on his head.

4. Therefore some disaigned among themselves, and sayde: To what end is this wast of oymment

5. For it might haue been sold for more then three hundred pence, and beene giuen to the poore, and they grudged against her.

6. But Iesus sayd, let her alone: why trouble ye her? for shee hath wrought a good worke on me.

7. For ye haue the poore with you alwayes, and when ye will, ye may do them good, but me ye shall not haue alwayes.

8. Shee hath done that shee coulde: shee came a fore hande to annoynt my body to the burying.

9. Perely I say vnto you, where-soeuer this Gospell shall be preached throughout the whole world, this also that shee hath done shall be spoken of in remembraunce of her.

1. Now the feast of unleuened bread drew near which is called the Passeouer.

2. And the high priests & Scribes sought how they might kil him, for they feared the people.

Christ doth now again confirme that, which he forewarned his disciples of so often before. but this last forwarning doth most evidently declare how willingly he offered himselfe to death: and it was necessary that it should be so because that God could not be appeased, but with a sacrifice of obedience.

His mind was also, thereby to meete with that offence, least the disciples supposing that he was brought to death of necessity or constraint should fall away. So this sentence was profitable two wayes: first, that it might be manifest that the sonne of God did willingly submit himselfe to death, that hee might reconcile the worlde vnto the father (for there was no other meanes whereby either the guiltinesse of sinnes coulde bee washed away, or the righteousness obtaigned for vs.) then, that hee dyed not as one oppressed with violence, which he could not escape: but because that hee offered himselfe willingly to death. Therefore he sayth that he commeth purposely to Hierusalem to die there. For when as he was at libertie to go back againe, & to passe away that time in some safe and secret place, wittingly and willingly he goeth forth amongst them euen in the appoynted time. And though the Disciples profited nothing at that time by the warning that was giuen them of the obediēce which he yelded to the father: yet afterwards their faith was much strengthened by the doctrine. As also at this day we receiue no smal profit ther by: for it setteth before vs as in a liuely glasse, that freewil offering and sacrifice, whereby all the transgressions of the world are blotted out and we behould the son of god gladly and boldly, going forward to death, and now a conquerour of death.

3. *Then assemble together.* Mat. meaneth not that they were assembled in the space of those 2. dayes. but he setteth downe this hystory, to declare that Christ was not told by man of the day appoynted for his death. For by what coniectures coulde this haue beene gathered, when as the enemies themselues had purposed to defer the time? The meaning therefore is that he spake by the spirit of prophesie of his death, when as no man could suspect it to be sonie at hand.

Further, Iohn setteth downe the cause why the Scribes and Priests had this assembly: namely because that daily there was more concourse of people to Christ. And then by the perswasion of Caiphas it was decreed that he should die because that he could not be overcome any way but by death: but they saw no fit and conuenient time, vntill that the feast being past, the people should bee departed. Hereby we gather that though those hungry dogs did greedily hunt after the death of Christ, yea though they sought the same outragiously, yet they were restrained with a secret bridle of GOD, so that nothing was done by their purpose or will. As much as lieth in them, they looke for an other time, but God hastneth the houre whether they will or no. And it behoueth vs greatly to marke this, Christ was not rashly caried to death at the pleasure of his enemies, but was brought vnto it by God: because that the hope of our help is established vpon the same, God is appeased with that sacrifice, which he had ordained from the beginning. And therefore his wil was that his son should be offered euen vpon the day of the Pasche: that the olde figure might giue place to the onely sacrifice of the eternall redemption. They which hadde no other purpose but to ouerthrowe Christ, thought an other time more meete: but God who hadde ordained him for a sacrifice to purge away sinnes, chose a speciall day, that might ioyntly oppose the body to the shadow. Whereby the fruit of the possession of Christ doth nowe more plainly appeare vnto vs.

6. *When Iesus was in Bethania.* That whiche the Euangelist doeth now set downe, befell a litle before Christe came to Ierusalem: but it is recorded

heere in very good time, to giue vs to vnderstand what occasion moued the high priestes so sodainly to make this haste. They durst not set vpon Christe with open violence: and it was not so easie a matter to take him by subtilty. Now when Iudas offered them a meanes vn hoped and vnlooked for, the easinesse to bring the matter to passe, made them to take an other courie. But the objections that Iohn doth somewhat differ in this hystory from Math. and Marke, which caused some interpreters, corruptly to imagine it to be an other hystory, is easily answered. The name of the woman which annoynted Christe, which our two Euangelists doe conceale, is expressed by Iohn 12. 3. but there is no mention of the man who feasted Christ, yet Mat. and Marke doe expressly say that hee supped with Simon the leper. But there is no contrariety in this, that I O H N sayth that his feete were annoynted, and ours say his head. Wee doe certainly knowe that the oymntes were not cast downe to his feete: but when there was more aboundance shedde then was woont, Iohn to amplifye the same sayth that his feete were wet. Marke also reporteth that the Alabaster boxe beeing broken, all the oymntment was powred vpon his head: so it doeth very well apppeare, that it ran downe to his feete. This therefore is certaine, that they all doe report one, and the same hystory.

8. *And when his disciples saw it.* This also is a common thing amongst the Euangelists, to attribute that to moe which begun by one, if they consented to the same. Iohn sayth, that Iudas the betrayer of Christ, beegan this murmuring, Mathew and Marke doe bring in all the disciples with him: for that none of the other euer durst to haue grudged if the vngodly grudging of Iudas, had not beene as a firebrand to set them on fire. But when as he began vnder some good colour to condemne that wastfull expence, they were all taken easily with that infection, And by this example we are taught what danger commeth of malicious and poysonfull tongues. For they which are of a good, simple, and modest nature, except they wisely take heede to themselves, yet being deceiued with false reportes, doe easily fall into wrong iudgements. If Christes disciples by keeping company with Iudas, were caried into a light and fond opinion, what shall become of vs, if wee do too easily admit talebearers, which do commonly maliciously quarrell at things well done? Heere may also be gathered an other lesson, that wee should not rashly giue sentence of a matter not thoroughly knowne. The disciples take holde of that which Iudas spake, and because it had some pretence, they doe rashly giue wrong iudgement. But it was meete for them to haue made better inquirie, whether the deede had been worthe of reprehension especially sith the maister was present, whose iudgement they should haue abidden. So wee know, that except the word of God doth goe before, the sentence is preposterously giuen: because that none of vs (as Paul teacheth, Rom. 14. 10.) liueth or dieth vnto himselfe, for we must all appeare before the iudgement seate of Christe, where hee shall yeelde his account, 2. Cor. 5. 10. And though there was great difference betweene Iudas and the others, because that hee sought wickedly and cunningly to cloake his theft, and the other were caried away with a meere simplicitie: yet wee see how they by their vnadvisednes were drawne from Christ, and ioyned to Iudas.

10. *Why trouble yee the woman.* It is maruaile that Christ, whose whole life

was.

was a rule and example of temperance and frugalitie, should now allow immoderate charge, which seemeth to be neare superfluous and needelesse delights. But the maner of defence which he vseth must be noted: for hee doeth not say that the woman had done well, as if hee would haue the same done dayly: but that which shee had done once, hee sayth was acceptable to God, for that there was iust cause why it should be so done. Therefore, though Christ desired not the vse of oymntment, yer in respect of the circumstance, this annoynting pleased him. Whereby we gather that some particular deedes, are sometime accepted of God, which yer may not be made an example to be followed. And it is not to bee doubted but that Mary was moued by a secret motion of the spirit to annoynt Christ, as it is certaine that so oft as the Saintes are called to some extraordinary worke, they are driuen with an vnwonted motion, least they should attempt any thing but by the direction and gouernement of God. There was no commandement which enioyned Mary to this annoynting, neyther was it needefull that there should haue beene a law set downe for one worke: but because that the heavenly calling is the onely rule of well doing, and that God refuseth what so euer men take in hand of themselves, Mary was gouerned by the motion of the spirit, with a certaine perswasion of faith to performe this dutie to Christ. But this one action of the woman is not onely defended by this answer of Christ, but the godly ioy of all men is heerby defended, who may bee satisfied that they and their workes are approued of God. It commeth oft to passe that godly men are not onely reprobued, but also vniustly condemned openly, who haue their consciences bearing them witnesse that they haue done nothing but by the commandement of God: and in this respect they are accounted proud, if they despising the peruerse iudgements of the world, doe satisfie themselves with the only allowance of God.

Beccause this is a hard temptation, and it can hardly bee, but that the corrupt consent of many must grieue vs, this doctrine must bee noted, that none can at any time be thoroughly encouraged to doe well, except they depend of the onely allowance of God. Therefore Christe doeth heere make the difference of good and euill to his onely pleasure: for when hee sayth that this womans worke was good, which his Disciples had already condemned, hee doth by this speech reprove the rashnesse of men, which iudge as they list. Wee therefore beeing armed with this defence, must learne to neglecte what rumours so euer are spread abroad of vs in the worlde: so that we know that which men condemne to bee approued of God. So Esayas, 50. 7. beeing oppressed with the slanders of the wicked, calleth GOD to witnesse, so Paule appealeth to his iudgement, 1. Corriathians 4. 4. Therefore let vs learne to regarde the iudgements of menne no further, then that by our example they may bee taught to obey GOD: and when as the worlde shall with a greate clamour rise vppe againste vs, let this comforte and satisfie vs, that which is accounted euill vppon earth, is pronounced good from heauen.

II. You haue the poore alwayes with you. Christ doth not simply defend the annoynting, that wee should follow the same: but declareth that there was a cause wherfore it was acceptable to God. It is conuenient ^h this shuld be wisely

observed, least, that together with the Papistes, we should preposterously deuise sumptuous rites for the worshipping of God : for when they heard that Christe would that Mary shold anoynt him, they imagined that hee was delighted with incense, waxe candles, magnificall ornaments, and such like pomps . For this cause they had all their glorious ceremonies, and they thought that they could not worship God aright, if they should not lash out into great charges. But Christ doth plainly except heere, that the thing which pleased him to be done once, should not bee accepted of him if it were done afterwards. But when hee sayth that the poore should be alwayes in the world, he distinguisheth betweene the daily worship, which should bee vsed amongst the faithfull, and that extraordinary, which ceased at his ascension into heauen. Would wee bestow our money well vpon true sacrifices ? let vs bestow it vpon the poore. For Christ sayth that he shall not bee alwayes with vs, to bee worshipped with outward pomps. Wee know assuredly and by experience of faith we feele that he is present with vs by spirituall power & grace: but hee is not visibly conuersant amongst vs to receiue earthly honors at our handes. So they are outrageous obstinat, which doe thrust vpon him fantastical charges against his will, and he refusing the same. Also, by that he saith the poore shall be alwayes, wee doe heereby gather that it is not by fortune that many doe want, but by the determinate counsell of God they are left amongst vs, for vs to exercise our charity vpon thie. The sum of this place is this, though the Lord commandeth that we & all that we haue, should be dedicated to him, yet hee requireth not any other worship to be bestowed vpon him, but ^{that} which is spirituall, which requireth no outward expences: but rather would that those things should bee bestowed vpon the poore, which of superstition had bene fondly bestowed vpon his worship. *12. shee did it to bury mee.* Christe by these words confirmeth that we said, that the pretious oyntment was accepted not for the fauour of it, but onely in respect of the burial: namely, because that by this signe hee would declare that his graue should yeelde forth a pleasant fauour, so as it should breath life and saluation into all the world. Therefore Iohn prayeth Mary, because that shee had reserued that oyntment for the day of his buriall. But after that the perfect truth of his figure appeared, and Christ come out of the graue, he did not onely perfume one house but all the world with the comfortable quickening fauour of his death: it were a childlike thing to reiterate that which had neither reason nor profit. *13. Wherefoeuer this gospel shall be preached.* Hee telleth that this deede of Mary shoulde bee honoured, for the doctrine of the gospel shall be praised. Whereby wee gather that our workes are not valued after the opinion of menne, but by the testimonie of the word of God. And in this hee sayeth, that the memoriall of her shall bee renowned throughout the whole worlde, hee doeth by this comparison sharply reprove his disciples: for by the consent of all the people, yea, euen straungers, and such as dwell in the farthest partes of the world, this deede shall bee prayled, which these present were so froward to condemne. Christ doth also louingly reprove his disciples, because they thought not so honourably of his kingdome as was meete. But by this sentence is the calling of the Gentiles testified, whereupon our saluation is established. But how the gospel should be preached throughout the worlde, we haue shewed before, Math. 24.

Mathewe 26.

Marke 14.

Luke 22.

12. Then one of the twelve called Iudas Iscariot, went vnto the chief priestes.

15. And saide, what will ye giue me, and I wil deliuer him vnto you & they appoynted vnto him thirtie peces of siluer.

16. And from that time he sought oportunitie to betray him.

17. Now, on the first day of the feast of vnleavened bread, the Disciples came to Iesus, saying vnto him: where wilt thou that wee prepare for thee to eat the Passeouer?

18. And he, said, goe into the Citie to such a manne and say to him, the master saieth, my time is at hand I will keepe the Passeouer as thine house with my disciples.

19. And the Disciples did as Iesus had giuen them charg, & made ready the Passeouer.

20. So when the euen was come, he sat downe with the twelve.

10. Then Iudas Iscariot, one of the twelve, went away vnto the high priestes, to betray him vnto them,

11. And when they heard it, they were glad and promised that they would giue him money: therefore he sought how hee might conveniently betray him.

12. Now the first day of vnleavened bread, when they sacrificed the Passeouer, his disciples said vnto him, where wilt thou that we go & prepare, that thou maist eat the Passeouer?

13. Then he sent forth two of his disciples, and said vnto them go ye into the Citie, & there shall a man meete you bearing a pitcher of water: follow him.

14. And where soeuer hee goeth in, say yee to the goodman of the house: the maister saith, where is the lodginge, where I shall eate the Passeouer with my disciples?

15. And he will shew you an upper chamber, which is large trimmed and prepared there make it ready for vs.

16. So his disciples went forth and came into the citie, and found as he had said vnto them, & made ready the passeouer

17. And at euen hee came with the twelve.

3. Then entred Sathan into Iudas, who was called Iscariot & was of the number of the twelve

4. And hee went away, and communed with the high priestes and captaines, how hee might betray him to them.

5. So they were glad, and agreed to giue him money.

6. And he consented, & sought oportunitie to betray him vnto them, when the people were away

7. Then came the day of vnleavened bread, when the passeouer must be sacrificed.

8. And hee sent Peter and Iohn, saying go, and prepare vs the passeouer, that we may eat it. 9. And they said to him where wilt thou that we prepare it?

10. Then he said vnto them, behold, when ye be entred into the citie, there shall a manne meete you, bearing a pitcher of water: followe him into the house that he entreth in,

11. And say vnto the good man of the house, the maister saith vnto thee, where is the lodging where I shal eat my Passeouer with my disciples?

12. Then hee shall shew you a great high chamber trimmed: there make ready. 13. So they went & found as he had saide

vnto them, & made ready the Passeouer. 14. And when the hour was come, he sat downe with the twelve apostles with him.

The admonition of CHRIST auailed fo little for the mouing of the heart of Iudas, or for the bettering of him, that hee without regard went presently to make that lewd couenaut with the enemies. But it is wonderfull and straunge that hee was so amased, that he thought hee hadde gotten by the losse of that oymntment a meete excuse for such an offence.

then, that being warned by Christles wordes, felt not what he did. The onely mention of the buriall shoulde haue molified a heart as hard as iron: when as thereby it had bene easily gathered, that Christ would offer himselfe in sacrifice for the saluation of mankind. But wee see in this glasse how blinde wicked conerous desires are, and how effectually they bewitch the minde. Iudas was earnestly bent to steale, hee was hardened by long vse to committe any offence: now because hee sawe no pray comming in from other where, he sticketh not to deliuer to death the Sonne of God, the author of life: and though he had a holy admonition to withdraw him, yet he went forward with violence. Wherefore it is not without cause that Lu doth expressly say, that Satan entered into him, not that he was gouerned by the spirit of God before (for he could not hie bene giuen fo to robberies & spoiles, if he had not bene the bond-slave of Satan.) but Luke meaneth that he was then wholly deliuered into the possession of Satan, that as a man desperate, he might run forward to his own destruction. For though Satan driueth vs not to sinne daily, but raigneth in vs while he carieth vs to a great liberty of sinning: yet he is said then to enter into the reprobate, when the feare of God beeing ouerthrowne, the light of reason put out, and shame shaken off, he possesseth all the senses. But God doth not execute this last kind of vengeance vpon others, but such as are ready ordeined to destruction. Wherefore lette vs learne to repent in time, least our long remaining in hardnesse doe establiish the kingdome of Satan in vs: for when we are once caught in this tyranny, there is no measure of madnesse.

It must especially be noted, that the couetousnesse in Iudas was the cause and fountaine of so great blindnesse. Whereby it appeareth that it was worthily called by Paule, 1. Tim. 6. 10. the roote of all euils. Further it is a vaine thing to demaunde heere, whether Satan entred substantially into Iudas. It is more meete to consider this, how horryble and monstrous a thing it is, for menne created after the image of God, and appoynted to bee Temples of the holy Ghost, shoulde not onely bee turned into filthy stables and synckes, but to become accursed dwelling houses for Satan.

17. *The first day of vnleauened bread the Disciples came.* First it is demaunded, why that is called the day of vnleauened bread, which goeth before the killing of the Lambe. For the Law hadde not commanded them to refraine from leauen, vntill they ate the Lambe. But this knotte is easily loosed: namely, for that this note is referred to the day following, as by Marke and Luke it doth euidently appeare. Therefore when as the day of killing and eating the Passeouer was at hand, it beginning at the euening, the Disciples doe aske of Christe, where he would eate the Passeouer. But there doth a harder question arise vpon this, that Christe obserued that rite the day before the whole nation celebrated the publike Passeouer. For Iohn saith plainly, that the day when he was crucified, was holden of the Iewes for the preparation not of the Sabbath, but of the Passeouer.

Further, they went not into the iudgement hall, least they should defile themselves, because the next day they were to eate the Passeouer. I knowe that many menne doe seeke for shifies, but they are such as auayle them not. For this cannot bee shifted ouer by any cauilles, they kept not
their

their feast on that day whereon they crucifie Christe (for it hadde not been lawfull for them on that day to haue de one execution vpon any manne,) and then they heide the solemne preparation, that after the buriall of Christ they might eate the Passouer. Nowe it is demanded how it befell that Christe eate his before. For in this law hee woulde not take vnto himselfe any liberty besides the prescript rule of the law. Some doe imagine that the Iewes deferred the Passouer of purpose that they might destroy Christ. But this deuise is very well confuted by Bucer: yea, and it falleth away of it selfe, it is so vaine. Therefore I doubt not but that Christe obserued the day prescribed by the law, and the Iewes followed some custome receiued now before. First it is without controuersie that Christe was slayne the day before the Sabbath: because that before the Sunne was sette, hee was put with speede into the next sepulcher, because that it was necessary to keepe holy after the euening. But now no manne doubteth but when the Passouer and other feast dayes fell vpon the day before the Sabbath, of an olde custome they were deferred vnto the next day: because that to keepe two dayes holy together were too hard for the people.

The Iewes doe say that this law was giuen presently after the people returned out of the captiuitie of Babylon, and that by an oracle from heauen, least they should seeme to haue altered any of the commandements of God rashly. If that it was the maner then to ioyne two feast dayes together in one (as the Iewes doe also grant, and as it appeareth by their auncient recordes) the coniecture is probable enough, that Christe obserued the Passouer the day before the Sabbath, obseruing the day appointed by the law. For we know how diligent and carefull hee was to keepe euery poynt of the lawe. For sith his will was to bee bound to the law, that he might deliuer vs from the yoke of the law, he would not forget to be subiect to this chiefe poynt. Therefore hee had rather omit the vse of the outward ceremony, then to transgresse the comendement which God had giuen, and so to bee scorned of the wicked. But it is certaine that the Iewes themselues will not deny, but that it was ordayned by the Rabbins, that so oft as the Passouer fell neere vnto the Sabbath, they should onely keepe holy one day for both. So it followeth that Christ did nothing against the law, though he kept not their common custome.

18. *Goe into the city to such a man.* Matthew noteth out a certaine man: the other two do say that the two disciples were sent as to a straunger. because they had this token giuen them, of a man bearing a pitcher of water. But this diuersitie is easily reconciled. For matthew omitting the myracle, noteth the manne, who was then known to the disciples. For without doubt after they came to the house, they founde some one of their acquaintance.

For Christe also of his owne authority commaunded him that he should prepare a place for him and his, naming himselfe the maister: and hee presently obeyeth. But though hee coulde haue poynted out the manne by his name, yet hee hadde rather directe his disciples to him by a myracle: that when they should shortly after that see him humbled, yet their fayth by his instruction might be supported. And this was no small confirmation, that in so short a space before his death, he was by so manifest a toké declared to be God: that.

that they might know that hee was not drawne to it of necessitie, but that hee yielded to it of his owne free will. And though it may bee that this profited them very little in the very moment of their trouble, yet the remembrance of it afterwards was profitable. As at this day also it is profitable for vs to know this for auoyding of the office of the crosse, that in christ at the very time of his death appeared the glory of the Godhead together with the infirmities of the flesh.

My time is at hand. Though he celebrated the passouer rightly according to the commandemēt of the law, yet he seemeth of purpose to alledge this cause, that he might not be accounted ouerthwart. Therefore he sayeth that he hath cause to make haste, so as he could not obserue the vsuall custome: because that he should be called to a greater sacrifice. Yet in the meane season, as we said, he altereth nothing in the ceremony. But he doth thus oft rehearse this, that the time of his death is at hande, that they might know that he doth haue of his owne free will to obey the decree of the father. And where hee ioyneth the shadowish sacrifice with the true, hee doth by this meanes exhort the saythfull to compare with the olde figures, that which hee fulfilled indeede. For this comparison doth not a little set forth the force and effect of his death. For the Passouer was not giuen to the Iewes onely to this end, that they might remember their olde deliuerance, but that through Christ they should hope for another to come more to be desired than the former. To this belongeth that saying of Paul, Christ our Passouer is offered, &c. 1. Cor. 5. 7.

13. *The disciples did as Iesus had giuen them charge.* In this that the Disciples doe obey of so ready a minde, is to be noted their frameableness to bee taught. For they might haue doubted, when as they should follow a man vnknowne, whether they should obtaine of the householder that which their maister commanded them to demaunde, sith they knew that he was not onely despised, but also hated euery where. But they do not doubtfully enquire of the successe, but that they doe willingly obey the commandement. And we must hold this rule, if we desire to try our sayth, that being satisfied by the commandement onely: we may goe forward whether God commandeth, and hoping for the successe which he promisseth, let vs not be too carefull.

20. *When the euen was come, he sate downe.* Not to eat the Passouer, which should be done standing (as trauailers which make haste hauing their shooes on, and the staffe vpe, doe vse to take their meate speedily): but the solemne rite being finished, I interpret it that he sate downe that he might suppe. Therefore the Euangelistes doe say, *the euen was come*: for in the first euening they slew the Lambe, and did eat the flesh thereof.

Matth. 26.

Marke 14.

Luke. 22.

21. And as they did eate, hee sayde, verely I say vnto you, that one of you shall betray me.

18. And as they sate at the table, and did eate, Iesus sayde, verely I say vnto you, that one of you shall be-

15. Then he said vnto them, I haue earnestly desired to eat this passouer with you before I suffer.

22. And

19. Then

16. For

22. And they were exceedingly sorrowfull, and began euery one of them to say vnto him, is it I, maister?

23. And he answered & said, he that dipperth his hand with me in the dish, he shall betray me.

24. Surely the Sonne of man goeth his way as it is writtē of him: but wo be to that man by whom the son of man is betrayed: it had beene good for that mā, if he neuer had bin borne.

25. Then Iudas, which betrayed him answered, & said, is it I, maister? he sayde vnto him, thou hast sayd it.

19. Then they began to be sorrowful, & to say to him one by one, is it I? and another, is it I?

20. And he answered & said vnto them, it is one of the twelue that dipperth with me in the platter.

21. Truly the Sonne of man goeth his way, as it is written of him, but wo be to that man by whom the sonne of man is betrayed: it hadde beene good for that man, if he had neuer beere borne.

16. For I say vnto you, hence forth I will not eate of it any more, vntill it be fulfilled in the kingdom of God.

And a litle after.

21. Yet behold the hand of hī that betrayeth me, i. with me at the table.

22. And truly the Sonne of man goeth as it is appointed: but woe be to that man, by whom he is betrayed.

23. Then they began to enquire among themselves, which of them it should bee that should doe that.

21. *Percei* I say vnto you. That he might make the traiterousnes of Iudas the more to be detestēd, he setteth forth the vilenesse of the same by this circumstance, that when he sat together with him at the holy table, he deuised treason. For if a stranger had done this, it might haue beene easlyer borne: but now this is a thing strange & incredible, that one of them so neere him should worke this, yea and hauing made and concluded so lewd a couenant, would thrust him selfe to this holy banquet vnder the pretence of frindship. Therefore Luke vseth this phrase of repugnancie, yet beholde the hande of him that betrayeth mee. But though Luke setteth downe this saying of Christ after the celebration of his Supper, yet the order of the time cannot be certainly gathered thereby, which wee know was often neglected by the Euangelists. Yet I deny not but that it is probable, that Iudas was present, when Christ distributed the signes of his bodie an bloud.

22. *They began euery one of them to say.* I doe not thinke that the Disciples trembled, as men amazed doe vse without cause to vex themselves: but as they abhorre the offence, so they desire to bee cleared from the suspicion of the same. And this is a token of trueuence, that they being so sharply pinched, doe not disdainefully answer their Maister, but euery one referrēth himselfe to his iudgment, (as wee must especially seeke for this, to bee cleared of his mouth) yet enjoying a good conscience, they would freely witnesse, how far they were frō so great an offence. But Christ by his answer doeth neither put them out of this doubt, nor point out the person of Iudas, but onely confirmeth that which I sayde euen now, that one of his familiar guesstes was the traitour. And though it was harde for them to bee leste in suspence and doubtful for a time, that they might exercise themselves to consider the heinousnesse of the offence: yet another commoditie followed thereof, when they knewe that the Prophesie was fulfilled, Psalme 41. 9. 55. 14. 15. Hee which did eate of my swete bread, hath lifted vpp the heele against mee. Furthermore, y

Iudas.

Iudas as the Lordes will was to admonish his children in all ages, not to be dismaide or discouraged for houthold traytours: for that which he had experience of who was the head of the whole Church must befall to vs whiche are the members.

24. *Surely the Sonne of manne goeth.* Christe heere taketh away an offence, which might haue grieuouly offended the mindes of the godly. For what is more absurd, then that the Sonne of God should be traitorously betrayed by a disciple, giuen ouer to the pleasure of the enemies, that hee may bee brought to a reproachfull death? But Christ saith that all this could not be but by the will of God. And hee proueth this decree by the testimonie of the scripture, because that which was appoynted, he reuealed beefore by the mouth of his Prophet. Now wee vnderstand whereto Christes woordes doe tend: namely, that the disciples knowing that whatsoeuer is done, is gouerned by the prouidence of God, should not thinke that his life or death was ruled by chaunce. But the commodity of this doctrine stretcheth further: for the fruit of Christes death is then rightly sanctified to vs, when as it appeareth that hee was not rashly caried to the crosse by menne, but that by the eternall decree of GOD hee was ordeined to bee that sacrifice for the washing away of the sinnes of the worlde. For whence hadde wee our reconciliation, but by Christes appeasing of the father by his obedience. Wherefore let vs alwayes remember the prouidence of God, wherunto Iudas himselfe and all the wicked ones (though it bee against their willes, and that they strue against the same) must of necessitie obey. Let this alwayes remaine sure, that Christe therefore suffered, because that God was pleased with such a kinde of pacification: yet Christ dooth not say, that Iudas by this pretence was freed from fault: because that hee did nothing but that which God hadde appoynted. For though GOD in his vpright iudgement appoynted the death of his Sonne to bee the price of our redemption, yet notwithstanding Iudas in betraying him procured his iust damnation, because that he was full of trechery and couetousnesse. Further, though God would haue the worlde redeemed, yet this was no cause but that Iudas was a wicked traytour. Heereby wee see, though men can do nothing, but what which God appoynteth, yet they are not thereby freed from guiltines, because they are caried headlong to sinne by their wicked affection. For though God by a hidden bridle directeth them to an end vnkowne to them, they mind nothing lesse, then to obey his decrees. These two things seeme nothing agreeable to mans reason, that god by his prouidence should so gouerne the doings of men, that nothing should be done by his wil & appointmēt, & yet shuld destroy the reprobate, by whom he excuseth his wil. But we see here how christ reconcileth them both together, making Iudas subiect to the curse, though this which he wrought against God, was appointed by God. Not that the treason of Iudas to perforce his counsel. But I know how many interpreters would auoyd this rock. They do acknowledge that the scripture was fulfilled by this work of Iudas, because god by his prophets testified that which he knew before. Therefore that they might mitigate that doctrine, which seemed somewhat too sharp, they set downe the foreknowledge of God in place of his decree. But the holy Ghost doth

doth decide this controuersie farre otherwise : for it doth not onely bring this as the cause of the betraying of Christ, because it was so written, but also because it was so appointed. For where Mat. & Mar. doe alledge the scripture, Lu. bringeth vs straight to that celestial decree: euē as he teacheth in the Acts, that christ was betrayed not onely by the foreknowledge of God, but of his determinate counsell. And a little after Herod & Pylat with the rest of the wicked did those thinges, which were foreordained by the hand & counsell of God. Whereby it appeareth that they do fondly seeke a shift, which doth lie to the naked and bare fore knowledge. *It were good.* By this word we are taught how horrible a vengeance doth remaine for the wicked: for whom it were better that they had neuer bene borne. But this life, though it is transitory and full of innumerable troubles, yet is it an incomparable benefit of God. Again, we do hereby gather also how detestable their wickednesse is, which doth not onely exsting with the precious gifts of God and destroy the same but bringeth it to passe, that it were better neuer to haue taste of the goodnes of God. Yet this clause is worthy to be noted, that *it were good for that manne not to haue bene borne* : For though the estate of Iudas shuld be miserable, yet it was good for God that he created him, who appointeth the reprobate for the day of destruction, and doeth also by this meanes set forth his owne glory, as Salomon teacheth. So the secret government of God is defended from all note of suspicion, which ruleth the counsellers and workes of men, as I touched euen now.

¶ 25. *Then Iudas answered.* Though we oft see them which are guilty within themselves to tremble & feare, yet to their feare & blinde torments there is a blockish adioyned, so as they do boldly proceed to deny any thing: so that at the length they do thus preuaile by their impudency, that they do discouer their secret sin. So Iudas when he was insnared in an euill cōscience could not yet hold his peace: the inward tormenter doth so vex him, vntill that with feare & doubtfulness he ouerthroweth him. Also Christ in his answer sharply reprobuing his blockish boldnes, doth prouoke him to consider the offence which he desired to hide. But his minde being now possessed with a deuilish fury, could not haue any such feeling. But by this example let vs learne, that the wicked by their bad excuses doe nothing els but pull a more speedy iudgement vpon themselves.

Math. 26.

Marke 14.

Luke 22.

26. And as they did ease, Iesus tooke the bread: and when he had giuen thanks, he brake it, and gaue it to the disciples, and sayde, take eate: this is my body.

27. Also he tooke the cuppe, & when he had giuen thanks, he gaue it them, saying, drinke ye all of it.

28. For this is my blood of the new testamēt, that is shed for many for the remission of sins.

29. I

22. And as they did eat, Iesus tooke the bread, and when hee had giuen thanks, he brake it, and gaue it to them, and sayd, take eat, this is my body.

23. Also hee tooke the cuppe, & when he had giuen thanks, gaue it to them: and they all dranke of it.

24. And hee said vnto them, this is my blood of the new testamēt, which is shed for many

25. Verily I saye vnto you,

17. And he tooke the cup, & gaue thanks, & said, take this, & deuide it amōg you

18. For I say vnto you, In it not drinke of the fruit of the vine, vntill the Kingdō of God be come. 19. And he tooke bread, & when hee had giuen thanks he brake it, & gaue it to them saying, this is my body, which is giuen for you, do this in remembrance of me.

20. Likewise also after sup

<p>29. I say vnto you, that I will not drinke hence forth of the fruit of the vine, vntill that day, when I shal drinke it new with you in my fathers kingdom.</p> <p>30. And when they hadde song a psalme, they went out into the mount of Olyues.</p>	<p>I will drinke no more of the fruit of the vine, vntill that day I drinke it newe in the kingdome of God.</p> <p>30. And when they had song a psalme, they went out to the mount of Olyues.</p>	<p>per, hee tooke the cuppe, saying: this cuppe is the new testament, in my blood, which is shed for you.</p>
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Sith Luke maketh mention that Christ tooke the cup twice: first it is to be demanded whether this is a repetition of one and the same thing, (as the Euangelistes do vse four times to speake of one thing twice) or whether Christ, after he had tasted of the cup once, tooke the same againe the second time. And this latter seemeth to me to be most likely to be true. For wee know that the holy fathers obserued a solemne manner of tasting at their sacrifices. Whereof that was said in the Psal. 116. 13. I will take the cup of saluation & call vpon the name of the Lord. So I thinke that Christ dranke at that holy feast according to the auncient manner: because that otherwise it could not be rightly solemnized, & that doeth Luke expressly declare before he commeth to speake of the new mystery, the maner whereof differed from the pascall Lambe. This also was a received solemne vse, to giue thanks, as it is expressly sayd at *taking of the cup*. For I doubt not but that there was prayer at the beginning of Supper, as hee neuer vsed to come to the table without calling vpon God. But now hee would doe the same againe, least he should omitte the ceremony, which as I shewed before was annexed to the holy sacrifice.

26. *As they did eate*. I doe not vnderstand these wordes, as if that this new and farre more excellent banquet should be ioyned to the supper of the Passouer, but rather that the same was first ended. As the same is more plainly declared by Luke, where he sayth, after Christe had supped hee gaue the cuppe. For it were absurde that one & the same mystrie should be seuered into diuers times. So I doubt not but that he gaue the cuppe presently after he hadde deuided the bread. And that which Luke doeth specially speake of the cuppe, I doe also extend to the bread. Therefore as they were eating, Christ tooke bread, that he might call them to take part of a new supper. The giuing of thanks was a certaine preparation and entraunce to the consideration of the mystrie. So the supper being ended, they should taste of the holy bread and wine: because that their securitie was first shaken off, that they might bee wholly bent to so high a mystrie. And reason so required that this euident testimonie of the spirituall life should be thus distinguished.

Iesus tooke bread. It is vncertaine whether the rite, which the Iewes holde at this day, was then also in vse. For the houlholder hid vnder his napkin a peece of bread, taken from the whole oafe, that hee might giue to euery one of his family a part of the same. But because this is a tradition of men, established vpon no commandement of God. There is no cause why wee shoulde too curiously labour to seeke out the beginning of the same.

And it may bee that it was deuised afterwards by the subtilty of Sathanto darken the mystrie of the supper of Christe. But if this ceremony

nye was then vsed amongst the Iewes, Christ so followed the custome then receiued, that yet he would lead the minds of his disciples an other way, by changing the vse of the bread to an other end. And this must be holdē without question, that the figures of the law being abolished, Christ instituted here a new Sacrament.

When he had giuen thanks. Matthew & Marke doe vse the word of *blessing* : but whereas Luke in stead thereof dooth vse the woorde, which signifieth *giuing of thanks* : there is no ambiguity in the sense. And when they in the cup doe after adde the giuing of thanks, they doe plainly enough interpret their former saying. The folly of the Papistes is so much the more to be scorned at, which doe blesse with the signe of the crosse, as if that Christ had vsed exorcisme. But that must be remembre d which I sayd euen now, that this giuing of thanks had relation to a spirituall mystery. For though the faythfull are commaunded to giue thanks to God, because he nourisheth them in this transitory life, yet Christ regardeth not onely this common foode, but bent himselfe to the holy action, to giue thanks to God for the eternall saluation of mankind. For if those meates which go downe into the paunch, should prouoke & stir vs to prayse the fatherly kindnes of God, how much more should the spirituall feeding of our soules, prouoke & inflame vs to be more earnest in this exercise of godlinesse?

Take yee, eate yee . Least I become heere too tedious, I will onely briefly touch what mann'r of thing the institution of the Lorde is, and what it containeth in it, then what the vse of it is, so farre as may be gathered by the Euangelistes. And this appeareth first, that Christ instituted a supper, which the disciples should communicate amongst them. Whereof it followeth that it is a deuilish inuention, that one manne alone seperating himselfe from the rest of the congregation doth priuaty deuour the supper himselfe. For what is more disagreeable, then for the bread to be deuided amonge all, and to be deuoured of one alone? Therefore though the Papistes should brag that they haue the substance of the supper of the Lord in their Masses, yet indeed it appeareth, that as many as doe celebrate priuate Masses, so many bulwarkes are leite vpe by the deuill for the ouerthrowing of the supper of Christe . By the same wordes wee are taught what manner of oblation was offered by Christ at the Supper. Hee commaundeth his disciples to take. Therefore it is hee onely which offereth. Therefore that imagination of the Papistes, that they offer Christ in the supper, proceedeth from a contrary author. And certainly this is a meruailous change, that mortall manne, who is commaunded to take the body of Christe, should take vpon him the office to offer vp the same : and so a Priest made of himselfe should offer vnto God his sonne. I goe not presently about to proue with how many sacrileges their faigned oblation doeth abounde : it is sufficient for mee to proue that it is so farre from being any thing like to Christes institution, that it is rather directly contrary to the same.

This is my body . They say that the breade was consecrated by these woordes , to bee a figure or token of the fleshe of Christe, I doe not disallowe : so that this woorde bee rightly and truly vnderstoode. So the bread which was ordayned to nourish the body , Christe doeth chuse and sanctifie

to another vse, that it may begin to be a spirituall meate. And this is that alteration and change, whereof the auncient wryters of the Church doe make mention. But yet it must be noted, that the bread is not consecrated by whispering and breathing ouer it, but by the euident doctrine of fayth. And truly it is a magicall inchantment, when the consecration is directed to the dead element: for the bread is not made a figure of the body of Christe to it selfe, but to vs. In summe, the consecration is nothinge else, but a solemne testimony to vs, whereby the Lord appoynerh an earthly & corruptible figure for a spirituall vse, which cannot be, except that his commaundement and promise be openly declared for the edifying of fayth. Whereby it appeareth againe howe wickedly this mystrie is prophaned by the Papistes by their secret whispering and breathing.

If that Christe doth consecrate the bread, when hee telleth vs that it is his body, there is no chaunge of substance to be imagined: but onely to be noted an alteration of the vse. If that the world had not beene now a long time bewitched by the subtilty of the deuill, so that the monstrous opinion of transubstantiation being once brought in, it will admitte at this day no light of true interpretation of these wordes, it shoulde bee in vaine to stand longer in searching out the sense. Christe sayeth, the breade is his body. Hee speaketh of the Sacrament. But it must of necessity be confessed, that the Sacrament consisteth of a visible signe, whereunto the thing signified is conioyned, which is the truth of the same. And this also is well knowne of olde, that the signe is often called by the name of the thing signified. Wherefore no man that is but meanelly exercised in the scriptures will deny but that this Sacramentall phraze of speech must be taken metonymically, that is the one for the other. I omit the generall figures, which are read euery where in the Scripture. I doe onely say this, that so oft as the outward signe is sayde to be that, which it doth represent, all men doe consent that it is by the figure Metonymia. Where baptisme is called the lauar of regeneration, Tit. 3. 5. where the rocke, which yelded water to the fathers in the wildernesse, is called Christ, 1. Cor. 10. 4. where a Doue is called the holy Ghost, Iohn, 1. 32. No manne will deny, but that the figures are called by the name of the thinges, which they signifie. Therefore how cometh it to passe, that they which regard the wordes of the Lorde, will not suffer that, which is common to all the Sacraments to be applyed to the Supper? But they will haue the simple and the litterall Mense. Then why doeth not the same rule hold in all the Sacraments? Certainly except they will grant that the rocke was substantially Christ, the obiection is but weake, wherewith they vrg vs. If we interpret it, that the bread is called the body, because it is a figure of the body, they pretend that the whole doctrine of the scripture is overthrowne. Neither haue wee forged now of late this rule for this maner of speech: but all men doe imbrace the same, as deliuered by Augustine from the authority of the auncient fathers, that the names of spirituall thinges are improperly ascribed to the signes: and all the places of scripture should be so expounded, where there is mention made of the Sacramentes. Sith wee doe then holde a generall rule receiued euery where, to what purpose doe they make such outcryes, as at a strange matter not heard of before?

But let those mased men cry as they list, this shall be accepted of men that are wise and modest, that there is a sacramentall fourme of speaking in these wordes of Christ. Whereof it followeth, that the bread, because it is the figure of the body of Christ, is called the body. But there are two kindes of men, which doe arise against vs, the Papistes being bewitched with their Transubstantion, deny that there is any bread, because that there remaineth onely a shewe without the substance. But Paule refuteth their fancy, affirming the bread which wee breake to bee the communion of the body of Christ, 1. Corint. 10. 16. Then the very nature of the Sacrament abhorreth this their deuise: for that it cannot remaine perfect, if there should not be a true and perfect outward signe. For howe shall we learne that our soules are fedde with the flesh of Christe, if there were not very bread set before our eyes but a vaine shew? Further, what will they say of the other signe? For Christ sayd not, this is my bloud, but *This cuppe is*. Therefore by their rule, not onely the wine, but also the substance whereof the Cuppe was made shoulde necessarily bee transubstantiated into bloud. Now that which is set downe by Mattheue, *I will not henceforth drinke of the fruit of the vine*, doth euidently declare, that it was wine, which he deliuerd to be drunke. Therefor the folly of the Papistes is plainly confuted euery way. But there are others, which doe reiect the figure, and presently as frantike men they doe receiue the same. The bread, according to their opinions, is truly & properly the body. For they account not of transubstantiation, as a matter without all colour of reason. But when they are demaunded, whether the bread and wine be Christ, they doe answer that the bread is therefore called the body, because that vnder this and with this it is receiued. And by this answer it is easie to gather, that the name of the body is vnproperly transferred to the bread, whiche is the signe of it. And it is meruaile, sith these menne doe so oft say, that Christe spake this in respect of the sacramentall vnion, that they doe not marke what they say, For what maner of sacramentall vnion is there of the thing signified and of the signe? Is it not because the Lord by the secret power of his spirit persoutmeth that which hee promiseth? So these latter masters of the letter are no lesse to be derided then the Papistes,

Hytherto I haue deliuered the simple exposition of the words of the Lord: now it is to be added, that there is no vaine nor idle signe sette beefore vs, but that they are made indeede partakers of the body and bloud, which by faith doe take hold of this promise. For the Lord shoulde in vaine commaund his disciples to eate the bread, affirming it to bee his body, if the effect shoulde not truly answer the figure. Neither is this in question amongst vs, whether that Christ doth truly or onely significatiuely offer himselfe vnto vs in the Supper. For though wee doe see nothing there but bread, yet hee doth neither deceive nor mocke vs, who feedeth our soules with his owne flesh. Therefore the true eating of the flesh of Christe is not onely shewed in signe, but it is also deliuered in very deede. But it is woorth the labour to obserue heere three things, least that whiche is spirituall, should bee myxed with the signe: next, least CHRIST should be sought vpon the earth, or in earthly elements: thirdly, least there should be imagined another maner of eating, then that whiche by the secret power of the spirit inspireth into vs the life of Christe,

but we obtaine him by no other meane, but by faith alone. First (as I sayd) except wee will ouerthrow all, there must be a distinction betweene the signe and the thing signified. Neither can there be any profit had by the Sacrament, except that according to the euidenes of our capacity it lead vs from the beholding of the earthly element to the heavenly mystery. So that whosoener shall not discern the body of Christ from the bread, and the blood from the wine, shall neuer vnderstand what the Supper meaneth, or to what end the faithfull should vse these signes. Afterward let that lawfull meane of seeking of Christ follow, let not our mindes rest vpon the earth, but ascend on high to the celestiaall glory, where hee dwelleth. For the body of Christe is not so clothed with life, which is vncorrupt, as that it should cast away the proper nature: whereof it followeth that it is finite. And now hee is ascended aboue the heauens, least wee should hold any grosse imagination of his being vpon the earth. And surely if this mystery bee heauenly, there is nothing more preposterous, then to drawe him to the earth, who rather calleth vs vp to him. The last which I sayd is to be noted, is the kinde of eating. For it must not bee dreamed that his substance should naturally descend into our soules: but wee doe eate his flesh, when wee doe receiue life by the same. For the portion or likenesse of bread with fleshe must be kept, whereby we are taught that our soules are so fed with the flesh of Christ, as our bodies receiue strength by bread. The fleshe of Christ is therefore a spirituall nourishment: and it doeth therefore giue life, because that the holy Ghost doth powre into vs the life, which is in it. And though that there is a diuersitie betweene the eating of the flesh of Christ, and to beleue in him: yet it is euidently knowne that none can feede vpon Christ otherwise then by faith, because that the very eating is an effect of faith.

29. *I say vnto you.* Mattheue and Marke doe adde this sentence to the holy Supper, after that Christe had giuen the signe of his bloude in the cuppe. Whereof some doe gather, that Luke doeth sette downe the same matter heere, which he rehearsed a little after. But this knot is easily loosed: because that it maketh little for the matter, when Christ should speake this. For the Euangelistes doe onely apply themselues in this place to shewe that the Disciples were admonished as well of the approaching of the death of their maister, as of the new and heauenly life. For the nearer that the houre of death was at hand, the more they were to be strengthened, least they should altogether fall away. Further, when as his minde was in the holy supper to set his death before their eyes, as in a glasse, it is not without cause, that he telleth them againe, that hee doth now depart out of the world. But because that it was a sorrowfull message, hee presently addeth this comfort that there is no cause why they should feare death, for that a better life doth follow it, as if hee should haue sayd: Now I do hast to death, but so that I may passe thence to the blessed immortality, neyther will I liue alone in the kingdome of God, but I will haue you fellowes with me of the same life.

So wee doe see howe hee leadeth his Disciples by the hande to the crosse, and listeth them vppe from thence to the hope of the resurrection. As it was meete for them to bee directed to the death of Christe, that they might ascend.

ascend by the same ladder vppe into heauen: so now *since* that Christ dyed and is receiued into heauen, it is meete that wee from the beeholding of the crosse shoulde bee lead into heauen, that there may bee an vnion made betweene death and recovery of life. And hee promisseth that they shall be glorified together with himselfe, as it appeareth plainly in these wordes, *vntill that I shall drinke it new with you.* And that obiection whiche some doe make, that meate and drinke doe not agree with the kingdome of GOD is frivoliuous: for Christ hath no other meaning, then that his disciples should presently want his company, and that hee shoulde eate no more with them, vntill they should meete together in heauen. Further, when as the society of that life shoulde bee described, which needeth not the helpes of meate and drinke, he saith that there shall then be a new kinde of drinking. By which word we are taught, that he spake allegorically. Therefore in Luke he saith simply, *vntill the kingdome of God be come.*

In summe, Christ commendeth vnto vs the fruit and effect of the redemption, which hee purchased by his death. Where some doe thinke that this was fulfilled, when as the Lorde eate with his disciples after his resurrection, it is farre from his minde. For when as that was an estate betweene the course of the mortall life and the marke of the life celestiall, the kingdome of God was not as then reuealed: and therefore he sayd vnto Mary, touch me not: for I haue not yet ascended to the father. Further, the Disciples were not yet entred into the kingdome of God, that as partakers of the same glory, they might drinke that newe wine with Christ.

And where wee read that Christe dranke after his resurrection, when yet hee hadde sayde hee woulde not, vntill the Disciples were gathered into the kingdome of God: the shewe of repugnancy is easily answered. For he doth not precisely speake of meate and drinke, but of the fellowshippe of this present life. Also wee knowe that Christe did not drinke at that time, that hee might eyther strengthen himselfe by those meates, or to eate with his Disciples for company: but onely that by proouing of his resurrection (whereof they were as yet doubtfull) hee myght lift vppe their mindes on high. Therefore let vs bee contented with this naturall sense, that the Lorde promisseth his disciples, when he yet liued as a mortall man amongst them vpon the earth, that they shoulde afterwarde be companions with him of the blessed and immortal life.

LV. 19. *Which is giuen for you.* The othertwo Euangelistes doe omitte this clause, which yet is not in vaine. For therefore is the bread now become the flesh of Christ to vs, because that our saluation was once purchased by the same. And as the flesh crucified doth profit none, but them which eate the same by faith: so againe it were a colde manner of eating, and almost to no purpose, but in respecte of the sacrifice once offered. Therefore whosoever desireth to bee nourished by the flesh of Christe, let him consider the same offered vpon the Crosse, that it might bee the price of our reconciliation with GOD, But that whiche Matthewe and Marke doe not speake of in the bread, they doe expresse in the Cuppe: namely, that the bloud shoulde bee shedde for the forgiveness of sinnes: and this clause must bee referred to them both. There-

fore that we may be fedde rightly with the flesh of Christe, wee must beholde his offering vp in sacrifice: for it was meete that hee shoulde bee once giuen in sacrifice for vs, that he might be daily giuen vnto vs.

M A T. 27. Drinke yee all of this. Because it was the purpose of Christe to tie our faith wholly vnto himselfe, that we should not seeke for any thing with out him, by these two tokens he declareth that our life is shutte vp in him. For the nourishment and mayntenance of life, this body needeth both meat and drinke. Christ, that he might teach that hee alone is altogether sufficient to performe all the partes of saluation, attributeth this vnto himselfe, that hee is in steede both of meat and drinke. Wherein his wonderfull kindenes appeareth, that he willingly to provide for our faith, should so submitte himselfe to the rudenesse of our flesh. So much the more detestable is the sacrilegious boldnesse of the Pope, who doubted not to breake this sacred bande. We heare that the Sonne of God together by two pledges declared the fullnesse of life, which hee bestoweth vpon his. By what law hath a mortall man libertie to pull a sunder those things, whiche were ioyned together by God? Further, in that the Lord dooth purposely commaund all menne to drinke of this cuppe, whether should this sacriledge banish it from his Church. Wee read that he layd simply of the bread, that they should take it. Why doth hee by name commaund all to drinke, and Marke saith expressly, that they all dranke, but that the faithfull should take heede of any wicked innouation? Yet the Pope was not afraide of this seuerer commaundement, but that hee durst chaunge and violate the law established by the Lorde. For hee hath forbidden all the people the vse of the Cuppe.

And that he might proue that he haddereason to rob them of the same, hee pretendeth that it is sufficient to haue one kinde: because the one dooth so attend vpon the other, that the blood is ioyned with the flesh. As though it were not lawfull vnder the same pretence to abolish the whole Sacrament, because that CHRIST could likewise make vs partakeres of himselfe without any outwarde helpe. But these childish cauillations are no helpe to his vngodlynelle: for there is nota greater absurdity, then that the faithfull shoulde willingly want, or shoulde suffer themselves to bee deprived of those helpes, whiche the Lorde hath giuen them: and therefore nothing canne lesse bee borne with, then this vngodly renting of this mysterye.

28: *This is my blood.* I haue shewed before, that when it is sayd that the blood should be shedde for forgiveness of sinnes, that we are directed by these wordes to the sacrifice of the death of Christe, without the memory whereof the Supper is neuer celebrated rightly. Neither can the faithfull soules be otherwise satisfied but so farre forth as they hope that God is well pleased with them. But vnder the name of many, he meaneth not a part of the world onely, but all mankind. For he opposeth many to one, as if he should haue sayd, that he should be the redeemer not of one man, but y he should dye to deliuer many from the guiltines of the curse. Neither is it to be doubted but that the will of Christ was speaking to a few, to make his doctrine common vnto many. Yet it is to be noted with all, that in Luke hee speaking to his disciples by name, exhorteth all the
faith-

faithfull to apply the shedding of the blood to their vse. Therefore when wee come to the holy table, we must not only haue this generall thought in our mind that the world is redeemed with the blood of Christe, but let euery man thinke with himselfe that his owne sinnes are washed away. *Of the new testament.* Luke and Paul vse an other phrase, *A new testament in blood*: the sense yet is one: because this couenant is sanctified, confirmed, and made effectually by no other meanes, then by the spiritual drinking of his blood. But hereby it is easie to gather how foolishly superstitious the Papistes & such like become when they so greedily doe snatch at words. For though they should burst, this exposition of the holy Ghost cannot be reiected, that the cup should be called blood, because it is a testament in blood. And the same reason is of the bread. Whereof it followeth that it should bee called the body, because it is a testament in the bodie. There is no cause now why they should strue to haue the simple words of christ beleued, and to shut the eares against forren expositions, it is Christe himselfe that speaketh, whom they shall not refuse to be a fit interpreter of his own word. But he declarcth plainly he calleth the bread his body for no other cause, but because he maketh an eternall couenant with vs, that by his sacrifice once offered, we might now be feasted and fed spiritually. Further, here are two things worthy to be noted. For by the word Testament or Couenant we doe gather that there is a promise included in the holy supper. Whereby their error is confuted, which deny faith to be holpen, nourished, strengthened & increased by the sacraments. For there is alwayes a mutuall relation betweene the couenant of God and the faith of men. By the epithite *new* his will was to teach, that the old figures doe now end, that they might giue place to the euerlasting & eternall couenant. There is therefore a direct opposition betweene this mysterie & the shadowes of the law. Whereby it appeareth how much our estate is better then that of the fathers, for that since the sacrifice was offered vpon the crosse wee doe enjoy the whole and perfect truth.

M A R. 26. *When they had sung a Psalme.* Our three Euangelistes do omit those diuine sermons, which our Sauour made, as Iohn reporteth as wel in the house as in his iourney. For as we saide otherwhere, their purpose was rather to sette downe the hystorie of things done, then the doctrine. They doe onely note this, that he went willingly to that place, whether Iudas was to come, that wee might know that he so dispensed the moments of that time, that willingly hee might meete with him that should betray him.

Mathew. 26.

31. Then saide Iesus vnto them all yee shall bee offended by me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepheard, & the sheepe of the stocke shall be scattered.
32. But after I am risen againe, I wil goe before you into Galilee.

33. But

Marke 14

27. Then Iesus saide vnto them all yee shall be offended by me this night: for it is written: I wil smite the shepheard, & the sheepe shall be scattered.
28. But after that I am risen, I wil goe into Galilee before you.
29. And Peter said vnto him

XX 4 although

Luke. 22.

31. And the Lord saide: Simon Simon: behold, Sathan hath desired you, to winnow you as wheat.
32. But I haue praied for thee, that thy sayth faile not: therefore when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren.

33. And

33. But Peter answered and sayd vnto him, though that all men should be offended by the yet will I neuer be offended.

34. Iesus said vnto him verely I say vnto thee, that this night before the cocke crowe thou shalt denye me thrise.

35. Peter said vnto him though I should die with thee, yet will I not deny thee. Likewise also said al the disciples.

although all men should be offended, yet would not I.

30. Then Iesus saide vnto him verely I say vnto thee, this day euen in this night before the cocke crowetwice thou shalt deny me thrise.

31. But he said more earnestly, if I should die with thee, I will not deny thee, likewise al so sayd they all.

33. And he saide vnto him, Lord I am ready to goe with thee into prison, & to death.

34. But hee said, I tell thee, Peter, the cocke shall not crowe this day before thou hast thrise denied that thou knowest me.

31. *All yee.* That which Mathew and Marke doe extend together to all the Disciples, Luke sayeth that it was spoken to Peter alone. And though the speech was common to all, yet it is probable that Christ spake vnto them in the person of one, who both was to be warned aboue the rest, and also had need of singular comfort, least after his denyall of Christ, he should be altogether overwhelmed with dispayre.

L V. 31. *Behold Satan.* The other two doe more briefly and simply reporte that the disciples were forewarned of their fall. But the doctrine may be more plentifully gathered out of Lukes words. For Christ doth not onely speak historically of the trouble that was to come, but he expressly declareth that they should haue a conflict with Satan, & withall he promisseth the victory. And this admonition is very profitable, as ofte as any trouble cometh vppon vs, that we should set before our eyes the sleighthes of Satan, euen as Paule to the Ephes. 6. 12 teacheth that we wreastle not with flesh and blood, but with spirituall powers, &c. The meaning therefore of the wordes is this. When as you shall shortly see me overwhelmed, know you that Satan is furnished with these weapons to overthrow you, and he taketh this as a fit occasion for the weakening of your faith. And therefore I said that this doctrine is profitable, because that it often befallerth through our vnadvisednes that we are circunvented, while we neglect those temptations, whereof we should be afraid, if we considered them to be the fiery darts of so mighty and strong an enemy. And though he speaketh now of that most bitter contention, wherewith the disciples were once assaulted almost to the extinguishing of their faith, yet his doctrine extendeth further as that Satan goeth about dayly, seeking his pray. And when he is carryed with so outrageous a desire to destroy vs, it were very absurd that we should be slothfull and careless. Therefore let vs prepare our selves before the extremity of the battail appeare: for we know that Satan desireth our destruction, and he doth subtilly & diligently seeke al meanes to hurt vs. And when we shall come to the conflict let vs know that all temptations whence soeuer they come, were forged in the shop of that enemy.

The similitude of winnowing doth not properly agree in euery point: for we haue in another place scene the GOSPELL compared to a fanne, or a sieue, wherewith Wheate is cleansed from the Chaffe: but here

here it signifieth simply to winew, or violently to shake : because the Apostles at the death of Christ, were hardlier shaken then they were wont. This therefore is to be noted, because that nothing pleaseth Sathâ lesse, then the cleanning of the faithfull. But though he tosseth them to an other end, yet it is rightly said: that euen as wheat in the fanne, they are shaken and cast hither and thither. Yea, wee shall see a little after, that it fell out somewhat worse with the Disciples. And this is the meaning of the woordes of the Lorde, which are set downe by Matthew and Marke. *All yee shall be offended by me.* For they doe declare that they should not onely be stricken, but almost ouerthrowne: because that the reproachfull handling of Christ should also discourage them. For whereas it had bene their duties to goe forward with their maister, euen to the crosse, they are drawn backe with feare. So their owne infirmity is set before them, to the end, that with praying & sighing they might flee to the sacred sanctuary of God.

MAT. 31. *For it is written.* With this Prophecie hee encourageth them to passe ouer this offence: because God ceaseth not to acknowledge them for sheepe, which for a time are scattered hither and thither. For after the prophet hath spoken of the restitution of the Church, least the extreame calamities which were now at hande, shoulde driue the mindes of the godly into desperation, hee affirmeth, that though the gouernement being confused and ouerturned, there shoulde bee a sorrowfull and miserable dispersion, yet the grace of God should be the conquerour. And though almost all the interpreters doe restraine this place of Zachari 13.7. to the person of Christ alone, yet I doe apply it further, as if it hadde bene sayde, there shoulde bee no more gouernment, whereby the people should be preferred in safety: because the shepheards should be taken from them. For I doubt not but that the Lorde ment all that time, when after the tyranny of Antiochus the Church being spoyled of good pastours, lay waste. For the Lorde then suffered the sworde to goe through with a fearefull liberty, which, the shepherdes being ouerthrowne, miserably troubled the estate of the people. Yet this scattering hindered not the Lorde, but that at the length with his outstretched arme hee might gather his owne sheepe together. But though the Prophet doeth generally declare that the Church shoulde bee spoyled of shepherdes, yet this doth truely and properly belong to Christ. For when hee was the chiefe of all shepherdes, of whome onely the safety of the Church depended, he being dead, all hope might seeme to be taken away. And this temptation was extreame, that the redeemer, who was the spirite and life of the people shoulde sodainely be caryed to death, when he had begunne to gather the flocke of God together. And so much the more notable was the grace of God, when as the remnant of the flocke was wonderfully recouered againe out of that confusion and destruction. Wee see therefore that Christ applyed this testimony very aptly, least this scattering now at hand, should terrifie the disciples about measure: & yet that they knowing their owne infirmities, shoulde repose themselves vpon their pastour. This therefore is the sence, you thinke because you haue not tryed your owne weakenes, that you are valiant and strong enough: but shortly after it shall appeare that Zachariah foretolde the truth: the shepherd shoulde bee slayne, and the sheepe should be scattered abroad: but in the meane season let the promise which is

added, recreate and comfort you, that he will gather the dispersed sheepe home to himselfe. And this place doeth teach that no vnity is safe, but that which keepeth the sheepe together vnder Christes shepheards staffe.

32. *After that I shall rise againe.* Hee doeth more evidently expresse here, that which I touched euen now, that the disciples stricken with feare, shoulde for a litle time be as sheepe dispersed and going astray, so that yet againe they should be called backe to the sheepefold. For Christ doth not simply say that hee shall rise againe: but promisseth that he will be their guide, and adopteth them to be his companions as if they had stoode sounde: and that they may haue the more assurance, he doth before appoynt the place, whether hee will gather them together againe: as if he should haue sayde, I will gather you that are scattered againe to Ierusalem.

33. *Peter answered.* Though Peter dissembleth not, but speaketh of a sincere affection: yet because that with a vaine confidence of his owne strength hee is caried into a sonde bragge, he is worthily reprooued by Christe, and shortly after, hee is grieuously punished for his rashnesse. So the successe doth declare that Peter promised more then he was able to performe, because that he had not made sufficient trial of himselfe. Hereby also it is better perceiued how blockish a thing it is for man to bee drunke with trust in himselfe, in that he being againe admonished by the sonne of God of his weakenes, and hee addeth an oath, so that he yeeldeth not, neither forsaketh any thing of his vaine opinion, but that he proceedeth with greater boldnes, to pusse vp those lofty and bragging motions. Yet it is demanded, whether Peter might not hope for that which he promisseth of himselfe: and also whether he trusting in the promise of Christ might not promise this of himselfe. I answer that the promise which Christ made before to his disciples of the spirit of inuincible fortitude, belongeth to that time of renewing, which followed the resurrection. Therefore because they were not yet endued with the heauenly power, Peter trusting in himselfe, went beyond the boundes of fayth. And hee greatly offended two wayes: for he preuenting the time, rashly promised for himselfe, and reposed not himselfe in the promise of the Lorde. Secondly, with closed eyes hee passing by his owne infirmities, doeth rather securely then valiantly, promise more of himselfe, then reason woulde require. This therefore is to be noted, that euery manne being mindefull of his owne infirmity, should flee to the assistance of the holy ghost: then that no manne shoulde bee so bolde to take more vpon him, then the Lord promisseth. And the faythfull ought so to come prepared to the battell, as that not doubting nor mistrusting the successe of the victory, they shuld courageously resist feare, for fearefulnesse and too much doubtfulnesse, is a signe of distrust. But on the other side, blockishnesse must bee auoided, which both driueth away all care, and puffeth vp the mindes with pride, and quencherh the desire of praying. This meane is notably set downe by Paule to the Phil. 2. 12. when he commandeth vs to make an end of our saluation with feare and trembling, because it is G O D which woorketh in vs both to will and to doe. For of the one side he prouoketh thē that are humbled, to seeke helpe other where: yet againe, least this course shoulde make vs slouthfull, hee exhorteth vs to behaue our selues boldly. Therefore, so ofte as any temptation doeth assault

vs: first let vs remember our infirmity, that wee being altogether ouerthrowne may learne from other where, to seeke for that which is wanting in vs: then let vs remember the grace which is offered vs, which may put vs out of doubt. For they which forget their owne infirmity, without calling vpon God, doe imagine themselves to be strong, doe as rash soldiours, which rashly doe runne to the wars: & when they haue breathed out their surfeiting, they thinke vpon nothing else but flight. And it is maruell that the rest of the Disciples, after that Peter was reprov'd, doe yet fall into the same rashnes: whereby it appeareth how little acquainted they were with themselves. By the which example we are taught not to be so bold to attempt any thing further then the hand of God doth leade vs. because that nothing is more transitorie, or will soonervanish, then an inconsiderate zeale. The disciples saw nothing to be more vile and absurd, then to forsake their maister. Therefore they doe iustly detest that offence, but without assurance of hope of the promise, and neglecting prayers, they doe flie in vaine to boast of that constancie which was none.

Mathew

Marke

Luke 12.

35. And he sayd vnto them, when I sent you without bagges, and scrippe, and shoes lacked yee any thinge? And they sayd: Nothing.

36 Then he sayd to them. But nowe hee that hath a bagge let him take it and likewise a scrippe: and he that hath none let him sell his coate, and buy a sword.

37. For I say vnto you, that yet the same which is wrytten, must bee perfourmed in mee: euen wyth the wicked was he numbred: for doublesse those thinges which are wrytten of me, haue an ende.

38. And they sayd, Lord: behold here are two swordes. And he said vnto them: It is enough.

All Christes speach tendeth to this purpose, that he had as yet spared his disciples, and had not laid more trouble vpon them, then they were apt for. And he commendeth the ease of the former time, that they might the more willingly prepare themselves to a sharper warfare. For to what end hath he yet kept these simple yong nouices far out of the shot & reach of the darts: but that in this case they somewhat gather courage & strength, might be prepared to the battaile. It is therefore as much as if he should haue said, your estate hath yet bin easie and pleasant, for my will was as children to nourish you tenderly, now the full time is at hand, wherein I will exercise you as men. Yet the diuerty reacheth further which the diuerty of the two times doth here set downe: for if without prouision when matters were so quiet, as they might haue prouided for themselves, they wanted nothing when they went about their office: nowe much more in the tumult and heate, the care of victuall beeing cast aside, it becometh them to haue whether necessarie calleth them. And though Christ doth here especially remember what he would doe with his 12. disciples, yet withall he declareth, that while we are yet yonglinges and weake in faith, we shall haue so long time truce giuen vs, vntil we grow vp to be men therefore they do very euil, which do vse and apply their ease to delights, which doe weaken the strength of faith.

But

But let vs not doubt but that Christ at this day hath regarde of vs, so as he will not thrust forward younglings, and them that are vnmete for the warre, but before he sendeth them forth to the conflict, hee furnisheth them with weapons, and with power.

36. *Nowe hee that hath a bagge.* Hee doeth figuratiuely declare that great troubles and most sharpe assaults are at hand, euen as if a captaine meaning to bring forth his soldiours into the fight, should cry an alarme. And he commaundeth that all other cares being sette aside, they should apply themselves to nothing but to the warre, no, that they shoulde not so muche as thinke of their victuall. For hee teacheth (as the maner is in extreeme dangers) that all things should be solde to the bagge and the scrippe, that they might defend themselves with weapons. But hee doeth not call them to the outward battaile, but onely vnder the similitude of going to the warres, he declareth how hard conflicts of temptations they shoulde endure, & how grieuous assaults of spirituall troubles they should beare. Also, that they might the more willingly repose themselves vpon the prouidence of God: first, as it is sayde, hee biddeth them remember, that God had a care of them, so that when they went empty and naked, carying no victuall with them, yet he prouided for them. Such and so conuenient a helpe of God should make the which haue had experiēce of the same, neuer to doubt againe, but that hee will helpe in what so euer they shall neede.

37. *That yet the same which is written.* The force is in this abuerbe *Yet*, because that Christ declareth that he hath not done all things appertaining to his office, vntill that hee be numbred with the wicked and vngodly, as one of their company. But least the vilenesse of the acte to much amase them, he alleageth the prophesie of Isaiah, out of the chap. 53. 12. which of a certainty cannot be otherwise expounded then of the Messiah. Now sith it is sayd there, that he shoulde bee accounted amongst the wicked, it became not the faithfull to bee troubled at that sight (though it was cruell) much lesse to bee alienated from Christ, who could not otherwise be the redeemer, but by taking the reproofe and shame of a wicked manne vpon him. For there is no apter a remedy for the taking away of offence, when any absurditie doeth terrifie vs, then if wee acknowledge it to bee the pleasure of God, and nothing is done rashly, nor without good cause, which is done by his appoyntment: especially where the same was spoken long before, which appeareth by the successe of the same. Therefore, when the disciples were to hope for such a redeemer as God had promised in time past, and the Prophet Isaiah had testified, that he should beare the punishment vpon him, that he might deliuer vs from guiltinesse: this should suffice for the appeasing of the horror, that the disciples shoulde not make lesse account of Christ.

Therefore hee addeth, that *those things which appertained to him, haue an end*: signifying that nothing was spoken in vaine by the Prophets. For this phrase vsed by the Greeks, signifieth to be perfourmed, or to be brought to effect. Now when the successe doth proue whatsoeuer the Prophets haue spokē, this should rather auaille for the confirmation of our faith, the to make vs afraide or doubt. And though by this one argumēt christ doth strengthē & comfort the disciples, because ꝑ all the prophesies should be perfourmed: yet the counsell it selfe of the pur-

purpose of God, containeth in it no small matter of comfort: namely, that christ became subiect to the damnation which wee all had deserued, and was accounted amongst the wicked, that he might offer vs which are wicked, & ouerwhelmed with sinnes, as righteous to the father. For hereof are wee counted pure and free from sinnes before God, because that a lambe pure and free from all spot, supplied our place, as shall be againe declared in the next chapter.

38. *Lorde, behold here are two swordes.* Truly, this was a vile and a beastly rudenesse, that the disciples so oft admonished of bearing the crosse, doe thinke that they should fight with swordes of yron. Further it is vncertaine whether they say that they haue two swordes, as if they were well furnished against the enemies: or whether they complained that they wanted weapons. This is euident that they were so blockish, that they thought not of the spirituall enemy. But that the Canonists doe hereof gather, that their horned bishops haue both the iurisdiccions, it is not onely a filthy allegory, but a vile scoffe wherewith they abuse the word of God. And it was meet that the bondslaves of Antichrist should fall to this madness, that openly with sacrilegious contempt they shoulde tread vnder feete the holy oracles of God.

Mathew. 26.

35. Then went Iesus with them into a place, which is called Gethsemane, and saide vnto his disciples: Sit ye here while I goe and pray yonder. 37. And he tooke Peter, & the two sonnes of Zebedeus, and began to waxe sorrowfull, & grievously troubled. 38. Then said Iesus vnto them: My soul is very heavy vnto death: tary yee heere & watch with me.

39. So he went a little further and fell on his face, and prayed sayinge. O my Father, if it bee possible, let this cup passe from mee: neuerthelesse, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

40. After he came to the disciples, and found them asleepe, and sayd to Peter: What could ye not watch with me one hour

41. Watch and pray that ye enter not into temptation: the spirit in deed is ready, but the flesh is weak.

42. Again, he went away the second

Marke 14

32. After they came into a place named Gethsemane: then he said to his disciples sit ye here, till I haue praied

33. And he tooke with him Peter, and Iames and Iohn & he began to be afraid & in great heauines. 34. And sayd vnto them my soule is very heauie, euen vnto the death: tary here and watch 35. So he went forward alittle and fell downe on the ground, & prayed that if it were possible, that the hour might passe from him.

36. And he said: Abba, Father, all things are possible vnto thee: take away this cup from me: neuerthelesse not as I will but as thou wilt be done

37. Then he came & found them sleeping & said to Peter Simon, sleepest thou couldst not thou watch one hour

38. Watch ye & pray, that ye enter not into temptation the

Luke. 22.

39. And he came out, and went as hee was wont to the mount of Olives: and his disciples also followed him.

40. And when he came to the place, hee sayde to them: Praye, least yee fall into temptation.

41. And he gate himselfe from them, about a stones cast, & kneeled downe and prayed,

42. Saying: Father if thou wilt, take away this cup from me: neuerthelesse not my will but thine be done.

43. And there appeared an angell from heauen: comforting him.

44. But beinge in agony, hee praied more earnestly and his sweat was like droppes of bloud, trickeling downe to the ground.

45. And

Second time, and praised, saying:
 O my Father, if this cup cannot
 passe away from me, but that I
 must drinke it, thy will be done,
 43. And hee came and founde
 them a sleepe againe: for their
 eyes were heauie.
 44. So he left them, and went
 away againe, & praised the third
 time, saying the same woordes.

the spirite in deede is ready, but
 the flesh is weake.
 39. And againe, he went away
 and praised, and spake the same
 woordes.
 40. And he returned & found
 them a sleepe againe for their
 eyes were heauy: neither knewe
 they what they shoulde an-
 swere.

45. And hee rose vp
 from prayer, and came
 to his disciples, and
 found them sleepe
 for heauinesse.
 46. And he saide vnto
 them: Why sleepe yee?
 rise and pray, leaste
 yee enter into temp-
 tation.

36. Then went Iesus. Luke nameth only the mount of Oliues: Marke and Math. do giue a more speciall note of the place. But Luke setteth downe that which doth more appertaine to the matter, that Christ went thither as hee was wont. Whereby we doe gather that he sought not by his departure secret places wherein he might hide himselfe, but as it were of purpose he offered himselfe to death. Therefore Iohn sayth, that the place was well knowne to him that should betray him, because that Iesus was woont oft to resort thether. And so his obedience is againe in this place described, because the father had not bin appeased but by his voluntary death.

Sit ye here. Leauing the disciples a far off, he spareth their infirmity: as if that any man seeing extreame perill to be ready to fall vpon him in battaile, shoulde leaue his wife & children in a safe place. But though he would haue them all placed out of danger, yet he brought 3. of them nearer him: and that was a choise flower stronger then the rest. Yet hee tooke them not, for that he thought them able to beare the brunt, but that they might be a testimony of the common falling away of them all.

37. He began to waxe sorrowfull. We haue scene the Lord wrestle with the feare of death before: but because that now he buckleth his hands with the temptation, that ioyning is called beginning of sorrow and of heauines. Whereby wee gather that there is no true triall of strength, but in the present action: for then the weakenes of the flesh which before lay hid, bewrayeth it self, and the innermost affections do lay the selues open. Therefore, though God had already exercised his Son with some tastes of things to come, yet now by the approaching of death he wounded deeper, & striketh him with an vnwonted feare. Further, because it seemed a thing vnmeet for the diuine glory of Christ, hee should be so oppressed with feare and sorrow, many interpreters haue carefully applyed themselves to seeke for shiftes. But their labour was without aduice and to no purpose: for if wee should be ashamed of his feare and sorrow, our redemption should vapiish and perish. For Ambrose sayd truly, I doe not onely thinke it a matter not to bee excused, but I neuer haue his godlinesse and maiestie in more admiration: for hee had done the lesse for mee if hee had not borne my affection. Therefore hee sorrowed for mee, who hadde no cause to sorrow for himselfe, and the delight of the eternall Godhead being set aside, he is stricken with the loathsomnes of my infirmity. Therefore I do boldly name sorrow, because I doe set forth the crosse: for hee was not incarnate in shewe, but in truth. And therefore hee shoulde take vpon him the greite, that hee might overcome and not exclude the sorrowe. For they haue not the commendation of fortitude,

trude, which doe rather beare the woundes which are benumbed, then the greife of them. Thus farre Ambrose.

They which doe imagine the sonne of God to bee free from humane passions, doe not truly and in earnest, acknowledge him to be manne. Therefore, when it is sayde, that the Godhead of Christe rested, as if it were hidde for a time, that by suffering he might fulfill the partes of a Redeemer, is so farre from containinge any absurditie in it, that the mystery of our saluation coulde not otherwise bee fulfilled. For Cyrill sayde rightly: That the passion of the Crosse was not willingly suffered of Christe in some sorte, and that hee suffered the same willingly to satisfie the will of the Father, and for our saluation, thou mayest easily learne by his prayer, Father, if it bee possible, let this cuppe passe from me. For in that respect that the word of God is God, and naturally the life it selfe, no manne will doubt that hee feared death any thing at all: but beeing made fleshe, hee permitted the fleshe, that it should suffer those things which pertained to the same, and therefore as very manne hee feared death nowe present at the doore, and sayeth, Father, if it bee possible lette this cuppe passe from me: but because it cannot otherwise bee, lette it be, not as I will, but as thou wilt.

Thou seest how that the nature of man euen in Christ himselfe, suffereth the things belonging to it and feareth: but by the word ioyned to the same, hee recouereth that courage meete for God. At the length hee concludeth: Thou seest that in respect of the flesh, the death of Christ was not voluntary. Yet it was voluntary, because that for it according to the will of the father, saluation and life is giuen vnto men. And thus for Cyrill.

Yet it must be distinguished betweene the infirmity of the flesh, which Christ suffered, and ours: as it doeth much differ. For in vs no affection is without sinne: because that all menne doe exceede measure and a right moderation: but Christe was so troubled with sorrow and feare, that yet hee murmured not against God: but remained fast to the true rule of temperance: for it is no maruell, when as hee was perfect and pure from all spot, that the affections which hee shewed were pure and vnspotted, though they shoulde bee witness of his humane infirmities: but from the corrupt nature of men, nothing commeth but that which is defiled and hath dregs. Therefore let this difference be holden, Christ was afraid and sorrowfull without any spot of sinne: but all our affections are sinfull, because they doe breake out into excess. Nowe if at kinde of affections is to be noted, when with Christ was tempted. Matthew saith that he was sorrowfull, and grievously (or doubtfully) troubled. Luke, that he was in an agony. Maieke addeth, that he was afraid. But whence commeth this sorrow and doubtfulness, and feare vpon him, but because that in death he conceiued something more sorrowfull and more horrible, then the separation of the soule and the bodie? And certainly he died not onely, that hee might goe out of the earth into heaven, but rather, that by taking the curse vpon him, where to we were subiect, he might set vs free from the same. Therefore he was not simply afraid of death, as it is a departure out of the world, but because the fearefull triball seat of god was before his eyes, the iudge himselfe being armed with incōprehensible vengeance: & our sins the burden wherof was laid vpon him, with their huge waights, pressed him downe.

where

Wherefore it is no meruaile, if the horrible depth of destruction, grievously vex-
ed him with feare and doubtfullnesse.

38. *My soule is very heauy.* Hee maketh them priuy to his sorrow, that hee might moue them to haue a like feeling with him, not that hee knew not their weakenesse, but that after wardes hee might make them the more ashamed of their slouthfulness. Further, this kinde of speech expresseth a deadly wound of sorrow: as if he should haue sayde, that hee was without life, or halfe dead for sorrow. So Ionas answereth the Lord, (chapter 4. 9. I am angry euen to the death). Of the which I doe therefore giue warning: because that some of the olde wryters subtilly entreating of this place, do fondly fantasie that the soule of Christ should be sorrowfull, not in death but onely vnto death. And here wee must againe remember the cause of so great sorrow. For death of it selfe could not haue so vexed the minde of the sonne of God, if he had not felt that he had to doe with the iudgement of God.

39. *So he went a little further.* Wee haue seene the Lord other where, that hee might be stirred vp to pray with more vehemency, prayed out of the company of men. For out of the sight of men, wee doe the better gather our senses together, that they may be the better bent to that which we doe. It is not necessary so oft as we would pray, to flee into back corners: (nay, it is not alwayes expedient) but where some great necessity vrgeth, because the heare of prayer doth the more freely powre out it selfe in a solitary place, it is profitable for vs to pray alone. If that the son of God neglected not this helpe, it should be more then a madde pride in vs, not to apply the same to our vse. Adde, that where god alone is the iudge, because that ambition is not then to bee feared, the faythfull soule doeth more familiarly discouer it selfe, and more simply powreth out her prayers, sighes, cares, feares, hopes & ioyes in the bosome of God. And God permitteth many follies to his children, when they pray alone, which in the sight of men could not be without ostentatio. His gesture also, when he falleth down vpon the ground, doth declare an earnest zeale in prayer. For though the bowing of the knee was commonly woont to be vsed in prayer as a signe of honour and reuerence, yet Christ humbly lying vpon the ground, for the greatnesse of his sorrow, framed himselfe to a miserable behauiour.

O my father, if it be possible. Some doe striue in vaine, to shew that this was no prayer, but onely a complaint. Yet verely, though I doe graunt, that the request was abrupte, yet I doubt not, but that christ prayed. Neither is that of force against it, that hee desireth that a thinge impossible shoulde bee graunted him. For the prayers of the faythfull doe not alwayes flow in one course continually vnto the ende: they doe not alwayes keepe an equall temperature, they are not alwayes framed in a distinct order: but rather they are intricate and doubtfull, they doe either contend with themselves, or doe stop in the midst of the course: euen as a shippe tossed with stormes, though it bendeth to the hauen, yet it cannot alwayes holde a right and equall course as in a calme and quiet sea. That must bee noted which I sayde euen now, that Christe hadde not such troublesome afflictions, which might shake the pure moderation of his minde as wee haue: but as much as the sound and vncorrupt nature of manne would beare, hee was stricken with feare, and holden with doubtful-

doubtfulnesse, so that he was of necessity enforced amidst such violent streames of temptations, as it were to wauer in his prayers hether and thether. This is the reason why hee praying to auoid death, presently restraineth himselfe, submitting himselfe to the authority of the father, and correcteth and reuoketh that request which had sodainely escaped him. But it is demanded how he could desire to haue the eternall decree of the father broken, whereof he was not ignorant. For though the condition be added: *If it be possible*, yet this seemeth to be absurd, to make the counsell of God chaungeable. For so it was meete for him to hold, that it could not be that God should reuoke his counsell. But by Marke Christ seemeth to oppose the power of God against his decree. *All things* (sayth he) *are possible to thee*. But the power of God is ill applyed to this, to overthrow his trueth by making him variable and changeable. I answere, it is no absurdity if Christ after the common course of the godly, not looking vpon the counsell of God, should powre the desire wherewith hee was inflamed into the bosome of the father. For the faithfull in making of their prayers doe not alwayes climbe vpp to looke into the secrets of God, or sit at ease to consider what is possible to bee done: but are sometimes caried headlong with the heate of their desires. So in Exod 32. 32. Moses desireth to bee blotted out of the booke of life. So Paule, Rom. 9. 3. desired to bee accursed. Therefore this prayer of Christ was not premeditated, but the power and force of the sorrow wreasted this sodaine speech out of him, which hee presently corrected. The same vehemency made him not to remember the heauenly decree for the present, that hee could not in the very moment consider that hee was sent of this condition to be the redeemer of mankind: euen as great sorrow doth often blind the eyes, that all things can not be remembered at once. In summe, it is no absurditie if in prayers there be not alwayes a present consideration of all things, for the keeping of a distinct order. But in that after Marke, which Christ sayth *¶ all things are possible with God*, tend not to this end, as to set his power at controuersie with his vnchangeable trueth and constancie, but because there was no hope (as it vseth to come to passe in things that are without hope of recouerie) he throweth himselfe into the power of God. By the word cup or pot, as it is sayd other where, is nored the providence of God, which disposeth to all men a measure of the crosse and of afflictions, euen as the hougholder measureth out a parte to euery seruant, and deuideth the portions amongst the children. *Neuerthelesse, not as I will*. Wee doe see how Christ restraineth his affection euen at the first, and bringeth himselfe quickly into order. But first heere it may be demanded, howe his will was free from all fault, which yet agreed not with the will of GOD. For if the will of God bee the onely rule of that which is good and right, it followeth that all affections which doe differ from the same, are corrupt. I doe answere, though this is the true right line, to haue all our affections framed to the will of God: yet there is a certaine shew of some ouerthwart difference, which is not faultie, nor is imputed for sinne: as if any man should desire to see the estate of the Church quiet and flourishing, if hee should desire to haue the children of God freed frō troubles, that all superstitions should beetaken away, and the rage of the wicked repressed that they shoulde not hurt. Sith these thinges of themselves are good, the faithfull may rightly desire them

them, though the pleasure of God be otherwise, who will haue his Sonne to raigne amongst enemies, his children to be exercised vnder the crosse, and the victory of faith and the Gospell to be made glorious with the contrary assaults of sathan. Wee see how the prayers may be godly, whiche in shewe doe differ from the will of God: because that God would not haue vs alwayes exactly & scrupulously to search what hee shall determine, but he permiteth vs to search from him that whiche is meete for the capacity of our vnderstanding. Yet the question is not thoroughly answered: For when it was sayd euen now, that all the affections of Christ were rightly ordered, how doth hee now correct himselfe? for hee bringeth his affection so dowae into order, as if hee shoulde haue beene out of order. Truly, that patient moderation whereof I spake, doeth not appeare in his first prayer: for, as much as in him lieth, he refuseth and denieth to execute the office of the mediator. I answered, there was no fault in it, that the terrour of death being set before him, there came wthall such a darkenesse, that all other thinges being set aside, hee brake out to that prayer. Neither is it necessary subtilly here to dispute, whether hee could be forgetfull of our saluation: for this one thing should suffice vs, when hee brake into this prayer for the auoiding of death, he thought not of the other thinges which might haue stopped the same. If any man will except that the first motion (whiche shoulde haue beene bridled before it hadde runne out any further) was not so tempered as it was meete it should: I answered, in the corruption of our nature there cannot be seene the heate of affections with that temperature that was in Christ: but this honour must be giuen to the Sonne of God, that we iudge not him by our selues. For all the affections of the flesh doe so burne in vs, that they breake out into a froward stubbornesse, or at the least they haue some dregges mixed with them. And so Christ was moued both with the sorrow and feare that yet he kept himselfe within measure. Nay, as diuers pates in a song differing amongst themselves, are so farre from hauing any discord, that they do rather make an agreeable and a sweete harmonie: so in Christ there was a notable example of a due proportion betweene the willes of God and menne, how without contrariety and repugnancie they doe differ amongst themselves. This place doeth euidently declare that the olde heretikes which were called the Monothelites were too foolishly, in that they imagined Christe to be endued with one and the same will. Neither yet as hee was God, willed hee any other thing then the father. Therefore it followeth, y^e the affections of his human soule were distinguished fro the secret counsell of God. But now, if it was meete that Christ should lead his will prisoner, that he might make it subiect to the wil of God, though it was so wel ordered: how carefully must we keepe vnder the liberty of our affections, which alwaies are both caried without consideration, & headlong, and are filled with frowardnes? If that the spirit of God should gouerne vs, so that we would nothing but that which is agreeable to reason, yet we owe this obedience to god, to beare with patience that our prayers are not alwaies graunted. For this is the modesty of faith to graunt to God y^e he shuld determine otherwise the we desire. This rule must be especially holden, where we haue not any certaine & speciall promise that wee aske not any thinge but vnder this condition, that God should fulfill that which he hath determined: which cannot be, but by our resigning

ning of our vowes vnto him. Now it is demanded what christ profited by prayer. The Apostle to the Heb. chap. 5. 7. saith that hee was heard of his feare: (for so that place may be expounded, & not as it is commonly read, for his reuerence,) further, that should not agree if Christ had simply feared death: for he was not deliuered from the same. Whereof it followed, that for feare of a greater euill hee was driuen to pray against death. For when he saw the wrath of God set against him, for that he stood at his seat of iudgemēt laden with the sins of al the world, it was necessary for him to feare at the bottomlesse depth of death. There'ore, though he sustained death, yet because the sorowes of death were loosed (as Peter teacheth, Act. 2. 24.) in the wrastling he went away cōquerour, the Apostle hath good cause to say that he was heard of his feare. Vnlearned men doe here rise vp, & they cry out that it was a thing vnworthy, that Christ should be a frayde of being swallowed vp of death. But I would that they should answer me, what feare do they thinke it was, that wrong drops of bloud out of christ: for that mor tall sweat could neuer haue come but of a fearefull & vnwonted horror. If any man at this day should sweat forth bloud, & that in such abundance that the drops ranne downe to the ground, it should be an incredible wonder, if this should befall to any mā for feare of death, we would say that he had a faint & a womanish heart. They therefore which deny that Christ prayed that his father should deliuer him out of the gulf of death, they ascribe a daintines to him, yea vnmeet for a common man. If any man obiekt that the feare which I spake of, should spring of infidelity, the answer is ready, when christ was stricken with the horror of the curse of God, he was so touched with the feeling of the flesh, that the faith remained safe & sound. for the integrity of his nature wrought so, that hee felt without any wounding those temptatiōs which do pierce vs with their stings. In the meane season they do fondly imagine a victory without strife, which would haue him not to feele any temptation. And it is not lawfull to thinke that he dissembled any thing when he cōplained of the deadly sorrow of his soule: neither doe the Euangelists lie, in saying that he was sorrowfull and a fraide.

40. And he came to his disciples. Though hee was neither discharged of his feare, nor set free from his care, yet remitting that paynfull exercise of prayer, he tooke his solace betweene. For there is not such a continuance in prayer required of the faithfull, that they should neuer depart from speaking to God, but they doe rather by the example of Christ continue their prayers, while they holdinge on so longe as their infirmity doeth suffer, and cease for a little time, yet then after a little breathing they doe againe returne to God. It had bene no small comfort in his sorrowe to haue his disciples fellowes & companions with him: but of the contrary it was a sharpe increase of his sorrow to be also forsake of them. For though he needed not the helpe of any, yet because that he willingly bore our infirmities, & in his agony would especially giue a token of that his humbling whereof Paule maketh mention, Phil. 2. 7. it is no meruell if the sluggishnes of them whome hee hadde chosen for his fellowes added a great and heavy burden to his sorrow. For he doth not expostulate the matter with them dissemblingly, but of the very feeling of the soule he declareth that he is grieved, for that he was forsaken. And they were iustly ypbayed for their sluggishnes, because that in his extreme sorowes, they would not abide to watch the space of one houre.

41. *Watch and pray.* Because the disciples were slouthfull when their master was in danger, they are willed to looke to themselues: that the feeling of their owne trouble might waken them. Therefore Christe declareth, that except they vwatch and pray, they presently bee ouerwhelmed with temptation: as if he shoulde haue sayde. Sith that you are touched with no care of mee, yet haue regard of your selues, for your matter is heere in hande: so that if you take not heede, you shall be presently swallowed vpe of temptation: for to enter in to temptation is to fall downe vnder it. And let vs note that here is prescribed the maner how it should be withstood, not that we shoulde determine with our selues to vse our owne power and witte: but rather that wee acknowledging our owne infirmity, should seeke for defence and strength from the Lord. Therefore our watching without prayer shall auail nothing. *the spirit is ready.* Least hee should daunt his disciples with feare, he doth gently correct their slouthfulness, by giuing them some comfort and matter of good hope. And first he declareth, that though they be willing and ready to doe well, yet they must strue with the infirmity of the flesh, and therefore it shal be alwayes needfull for them to pray. So we see their readines prayesd, least their infirmity should cause them to dispaire, & yet he stirreth them forward to prayers, because they were not yet sufficiently furnished with the strength of the spirit. Wherefore this admonitiō doth properly belong to the faithfull, which being regenerate by the spirit of God, do desire to liue well but they doe as yet labour vnder the infirmity of the flesh: for though the grace of the spirit doth flourish in the, yet they are weake according to the flesh. But though the disciples onely are foretold of their owne weaknes, yet because the same lighteth vpo all men, which Christ speaketh of them, here is a generall rule to be gathered, that we must diligently watch in prayer: because that the power of the spirit hath not such force in vs, but that wee doe often fall through the infirmity of the flesh, except the Lord by his ayde doe lift & hold vs vp. But there is no cause why we should too doubtfully feare, because there is a certaine remedy set before vs, which is to be sought, neither far off, nor yet in vaine: for Christ doth promise them the victory, which doe apply themselues to prayer, that they may busily shake off the slouthfulness of their owne flesh.

42. *He went away the second time.* Christ seemeth by these words which Mar. reporteth, as it were without feare, more freely & with a mind more set at liberty, to comit himselfe to his father. For he doth no more desire that the cup shoulde passe from him: but passing by that request, he resteth rather vpon this, that hee may obey the counsell of god. But this proceeding is not expessed by Mar. nay, when he returned the second time, it is said that he rehearsed the same prayers. And certainly I think, that as oft as he prayed, he was driuen with feare & horror to seek to escape death. Yet it is probable that the second time he was more bent to yeeld obedience to the father, & by the bearing, of the first temptatiō, he was the more encouraged with the more boldnes to meete with death. Lu. doth not distinctly report that he prayed at seuerall times: but onely saith, that being more troubled, that he praied the longer & the more earnestly, as if it had bene a cōtinuall course of prayer. But we know that the Euangelistes sometime omitting the circumstances, do only set down the sum. Therefore where he saith that Christ came in the ende to the disciples, is a setting of that after, which shoulde haue bene before: as also in that other clause, where he declareth that the angel appeared fro heauen, before that he spake of the agony of Christ.

But there is no absurditie in this, that the order is thus inuerted: for that wee might know that the Angell was not sent vnto him in vaine, the necessitie is after set downe. So he doth as it were declare the cause by setting down the same afterward. And though there is no strength giuen, but onely by the spirite of god yet that letteth not but that God may vse his Angels as ministers. And heereby it may be gathered howe great afflictions the Son of God bore, in that he was driven to haue the helpe of God set before his eye, for him to see.

43. *Hee found them a sleepe againe: for their eyes were heauie.* This sleepeinesse came neither of surfetting, nor of grosse blockishnesse, nor of too much delight of the flesh, but rather of immoderate sorrowe as Luke declareth. Whereby we doe the beter perceiue, howe our flesh is bent to slouth that the daungers themselves do bring it into a forgetfulnesse of God. So Satan hath on euery side apte and fitt occasion to entrappe vs. For if we feare no aduersitie, hee maketh vs drunke with sleepe. and in feare and sorrow, which should stirre vs vp to prayer hee ouerwhelmeth our senses, least they should flie vnto God, so men doe flie away euery way, and are estranged from God, vntill hee gather them to hym. The circumstance is also to be noted, that the disciples being so sharply rebuked, should presently almost fall to sleepe againe. This is not spoken of all the company of them, but of the three whom Christ had chosen as his chiefe companions. What then shoulde become of the common sort when this fell out in the chiefe of them. The rehearfall also of the same woordes was no vaine babbling (which Christ before condemned in hypocrites, who by a vaine babbling thinke that they shall obtaine that which they neuer asked sincerely and from the heart) but Christ by his example teacheth, that it is not meet that we should be discouraged or weary of prayer, if that we doe not presently obtaine our requestes, if the assault of temptation doe not extinguish the desire of prayer, but that wee should aske the third time and the fourth, that which God seemed to haue denied.

Mathew 26.

45. Then came hee to his disciples, & said vnto them: Sleepe henceforth, & take your rest: behold the houre is at hand and the sun of man is giuen into the hand of sinners.

46. Rise let vs goe: behold he is at hand that betraieeth me

47. And while he yet spake loe Iudas one of the twelue came & with him a great multitude with swords and stauers, from the hie priestes and Elders of the people.

48. Now, hee that betrayed him, hadde giuen them a token say-

Marke 14

41. And hee came the thirde time, and said vnto them. Sleepe henceforth, and take your rest, it is enough, the houre is come: Behold, the Sonne of man is deliuered into the handes of sinners.

42. Rise yppe, lesse vs goe: Lo, he that betraieeth me, is at hand.

43. And immediately, while he yet spake came Iudas that was one of the twelue & with him a great multitude with swords & stauers from the hie priestes, and Scribes, and Elders.

44. And hee that betrayed him hadde giuen them a token, saying

Luke 22.

47. And while hee yet spake: beholde a company, and hee that was called Iudas one of the twelue went before them, & came neare vnto Iesus to kisse him.

48. And Iesus said vnto him. Iudas, betraiest thou the Sonne of man with a kisse?

ing, whome so euer I shall kisse, that is hee, lay holde on him.

49. And fourth with he came to Iesus and sayde: GOD saue thee maister, and kissed him:

50. Then Iesus sayd vnto him. Friends: wherefore arise thou come? Then came they & layde handes on Iesus and tooke him.

whome soeuer I shall kisse, he it is: take him & lead him away safely.

45. And as soone as hee was come, he went straight way to him, & sayd: maister, maister. and kissed him.

46. Then they Layde theyr handes on him, and tooke him.

45. Sleepe hence forth, and take your rest. It is euident enough that Christ speaketh this ironically: but it must be withall considered, to what ende that manner of speech was vsed. For sith Christe had preuailed nothing by admonishing his disciples, he doth not onely sharply reprove their slouthfulnesse: but hee sayth, though they would be slouthfull, that it shall be no longer safe for them. Therefore the meaning is: because hethereto I haue wasted my wordes amongst you, I will not yet cease to exhort you: but how soeuer I doe suffer you to sleepe, yet your enemies will not allow it you, but they will enforce you to watch whether you will or no. Therefore it is added in Marke. *It is enough*: as if hee shoulde haue sayd, now it is no time to sleepe. And in this manner the Lord doth often chasten the slouthfulnesse of men, that they which were deafe at his wordes, at length should be compeld with troubles to awake. Wherefore let vs learne with speede to giue eare to the words of the Lord, least that which hee would drawe vs vnto willingly, should afterward be wrested out of vs, by necessitie.

46. Rise, let vs goe. By these words he declareth, that after his prayer hee was furnished with new forces. Hee was before willing enough to die: but at the very point he had a hard combate with the infirmities of the flesh, that hee would willingly haue withdrawne himselfe from death, if he might haue had the good leaue of the father. Therefore with praiers & teares hee obtayned a newe force fro heauen: not that he wauered at any time for want of power. but because that vnder the infirmities of the flesh, which he had willingly taken vpon him, his will was doubtfully and with troublesome and hard endeuour to labour: that in his owne person he might get vs the victory. But now that trouble being appeased, and the feare subdued, againe that he might offer a sacrifice of free will to the father, he doth not only stay from flight, but doth willingly meete with death.

47. While he yet spake. The Euangelistes doe diligently declare that the Lorde foresaw what soeuer befell: whereby it may be certainly gathered, that he was not drawne to death by outward violence, but so farre forth as the wicked executed the secret counsell of God. Therefore, though the disciples had set before their eyes a pitifull sight full of terrour: yet there is offered with all an argument of comfort, wherewith they might comfort themselves, when as the action it selfe declared that nothing was done by fortune, & that which Christ foretold, might direct the to behold the glory of his Godhead. In that there was an armed company sent by the priests, & that they had gotten by entreaty of Pilate a captaine & a band of mē, it doth appeare & they were troubled and vexed with a bad conscience, so that they did all thinges fearefully. For to what end should they

they neede so great forces for to take Christ, whom they knew was not defended with any force of weapons? Therefore they made such diligent preparation because that the diuine power of Christ, which by many instructions they were forced to feeble, did inwardly torment them. and filled their hearts full of feare: but of the other side their wonderfull madnes shewed it selfe, that they doubted not with the force of weapons to rise against God. 48. *Now hee that betrayed.* I doubt not but this Judas was restrained either with the reuerence of the Lord, or with the shame of his offence, that he durst not openly professe himselfe to be one of the enemies: yea, and that admonition which Marke sayth that he gaue to the souldiours, that they should lead him away warily, was therefore giuen as I doe image, because that he remembred that by very many meanes Christe had heretofore proued his Godhead. But in the meane season his madnes was to be wondred at, either in that his friuolous dissimulation to hide himselfe, when he shoulde come into the sight of the sonne of God, or that hee woulde oppose the witte of men against his great power: but that the wicked are so driuen forward with their owne madnes, that they entangle themselves in their winding and crooked thoughts.

49. *God saue thee maister.* I doubt not but that Judas as one afraid at the perill of his maister, in these words pretended a pitifull affection: therefore Marke expresseth a patheticall repetition, *Maister maister.* For though the maiestie of Christ vrged him, yet the deuill had so bewitched his mind, he hoped throughly to couer his treason with a kisse and flattering words. Therefore this salutation or acclamation was a pretence of pietie: & I doe iudge the same of the kisse. For though it was an ancient custome amongst the Iewes to entertaine their friends with a kisse: yet because that Judas hadde a little before departed from Christ, he seemeth now as one afraid at that sodaine danger, to giue his maister this last kisse. So in shew of pietie he exceedeth all the rest, while hee seemeth to be hardly drawn frō his maister: in the meane season it appeareth by Christs answere, that he profited nothing by his deceitfull dealings.

50. *Friend, wherefore art thou come?* It is more expressly set downe by Luke, *Judas, dost thou betray the sonne of man with a kisse.* But this reproofe is the more vehement, that he doth wickedly abuse the good will of the maister, and the great honor which he had bestowed vpon him to so great treachery. For it is no ironical speech when Christ calleth him friend: but he obiecteth vnto him his ingratitude, that of a neare freind and companion he is become a traitour, as it was spoken of before in the Psalme 41. and 55. 13. 14. If a stranger hadde done this, it might haue bene borne, but nowe it was my familiar and companion, with whom I ate bread ioyfully, who went into the temple of the Lord with mee, and hath lifted vp his heele against mee. And heere wee doe evidently see, that which I spake of before, with what craft soeuer hypocrites doe couer themselves, and what pretences soeuer they will seeme to make, when they shal appeare before the Lord, their sinnes shall be discovered: yea the greater iudgment shall light vpon them, for that they being receiued into the bosome of Christe doe traiterously rise vppe against him: for the name of a *Friend*, as wee sayde, carrieth with it a sharpe reproofe. But vnto this mischeife which Christe once did beare in his owne personne, wee must knowe that the

Church shall be alwayes subiect, that thee shal alwayes nourish traytours in hee
owne bosome.

And therefore it is sayd a little beefore : The traitour came, who was one of
the twelve : least by such examples wee should be troubled aboue measure : for
by both the meanes the Lord would trie our faith, while Sathan oppresseth vs
and the Church without by open enemies, and within by hypocrites, he forgeth
the secret destruction of it. Yet whatsoeuer we are, that are of his disciples, wee
are together taught to worship God in sinceritie. For the defections which we
doe dayly see, doe prouoke vs both to feare, and to the studie of true godlinesse,
as Paul sayth. Who soeuer calleth vpon the name of the Lord, let him depart
from iniquitie : wee are all commanded to kille the sonne of God. Therefore
be ware that no man doe it traiterously : otherwise it shall be to their great cost,
that they were preferred to so great honour.

Math. 26.

Marke. 14

Luke 22.

51. And beholde, one of them
which were with Iesus stretched
out his hande, and drew his
sword, & stroke a seruant of
high priest, and smote of his eare.

52. Then sayd Iesus vnto him
put vp thy sword into his place:
for all that take the sword, shall
perish with the sword.

53. Either thinkest thou, that
I cannot now praye to my Fa-
ther, & hee wil giue me more then
twelue legions of angels?

54. How then should the scrip-
tures be fulfilled, which say that
it must be so?

55. The same houre sayd Iesus
to the multitude yee be come out
as it were against a thief, with
swords and stauces to take me: I
sate daily teaching in the tem-
ple amongst you, and you take
me not.

56. But altho this was done, that
the Scripture of the Prophetes
might be fulfilled. Then all the
disciples forsooke him and fled.

47. And one of them that
stood by, drew out a sword,
and smote a seruant of the
hie prieste, and cutte off his
eare.

48. And Iesus answered
and sayd vnto them: yee bee
come out, as vnto a theefe
with swords and stauces to
take me.

49. I was daily with you,
teaching in the temple, and
yee took me not: but this is
done that the scripture should
be fulfilled.

50. Then they all forsooke
him and fled.

51. And there followed him
a certaine young man, clo-
thed in linnen vpon his bare
body, and the younge manne
caught him.

52. But hee left his linnen
cloth, and fledde from them
naked.

49. Now, whē they which
were about him, saw what
would followe, they sayd
vnto him: Lord, shall wee
smite with the sword?

50. And one of the smote
a seruant of the hie priest
and stroke of hys righte
eare.

51. Then Iesus answered
them, and sayd: Suffer
them thus farre: and hee
touched his eare and head
led him.

52. Then Iesus said vnto
the hie Priestes and cap-
taines of the temple, and
the elders which were
come to him. Bee yee come
out as vnto a theefe with
swords and stauces.

53. When I was daily
with you in the Temple,
ye stretched not forth the
handes against mee: but
this is your very houre
the power of darkenesse.

51. Behold one of them. Luke sayth that all the Disciples conspired together to
this ende, that they might fight for their maister. Whereby it appeareth, how
much

much bolder and readier we are to fight, then to suffer. Wherefore it becometh vs wisely to consider what the Lorde shall command, and what he shall require of euery of vs, least the heat of our zeale doe breake forth out of season and measure. And that the disciples are sayde to haue asked Christ, they did it not of that minde, that they might obey his commandment: but by these woordes they declared that they were prest and ready to refell the force of the enemies. But Peter tarried not vntill that he should be commanded and lycensed to strike, but rashly he steppeth forth to vse vnlawfull force. This stoutnes seemeth at the first sight to be prayseworthy, that the disciples forgetting their own weaknesse, though they were vnequally matched for resistance, yet would pledge their bodies for their maister, and doubted not to throw themselves into the certaine danger of death. For they had rather to die with the Lord then themselves to liue and see him ouerwhelmed. But because that they attempt more then the calling of God would suffer or permit, their rashnesse is iustly condemned. Wherefore that the Lorde may be pleased with our doings, let vs learne to depende vppon his will, and let not any man moue a finger further then he shall be commanded by him. And therefore it doth especially behoue vs diligently to apply our selues to this modesty, because that in steed of a right and well ordered zeale, there dooth for the most parte raygne in vs a disordered rashnesse. The Euangelistes doe in this place conceale Peters name: but Iohn declareth, and it dooth shortly after by the text appeare that it was Peter, who is heere noted, though his name bee not sette downe. Yet it may bee easily gathered by Luke, that hee hadde also other fellowes as hot as himselfe: for hee doeth not onely speake vnto one, but hee sayeth generally vnto all, *Suffer them thus farre.*

52. *Put vp thy sword.* Christ in these wordes confirmeth that commandment of the law, wherein priuate men are forbidden the vse of the sword. And the appoyntment of the punishment, which is presently added must especially be noted. For the penalty was not left to be appoynted at the pleasure of men, for them thereby to reuenge their owne blood. But God himselfe by refrayning vs severely frō murders, doth declare how deare mankind is vnto him. First therefore he will not be defended by force & might, because that God had forbidden to strike in the law. And this is a generall reason, & presently he descendeth to a speciall. But here he moueth a question, whether it be neuer lawfull by violence to repell vniust violence. For when Peter had to doe with vngodly and wicked theues, hee is yet condemned, because he tooke the sword. If that in this fact an exception of a moderate defence coule not auaille, Christe seemeth to tye all mens handes. But though this question was handled by vs before vppon the fift chapter, yet I will now againe in fewe wordes rehearse my iudgement. Firste it is meete to distinguish betweene the ciuill court and the court of conscience. For if any manne resisteth a theefe, because the lawes doe arme him against a common enemy of mankind, he shall not be in danger of publike punishment. So, as oft as it is opposed as a defence against vniust violence, the penalty which God commanded earthly iudges to execute, ceaseth. But the simple goodnes of the cause doth not free the conscience from guiltines, except there go a pure affection with it. Therefore that a man may rightly and lawfully

defend himselfe, it is necessary for him to put off the heate of anger & hatred, and desire of reuenge and all disordered forces of the minde, that the defence may haue no troublesome thing in it. Because that this is very rare, and besafeth scarcely at any time. Christ hath good cause to call his disciples backe to the generall rule, that they should altogether abstaine fro the sword. Furthermore, fanaticall menne doe fondly abuse this testimony, that they might pull the sword from the iudges. They say that it is wicked to strike with the sword: and I doe graunt the same to be true: for it is lawfull for no man to commit murder at his owne pleasur, to bee the authour of murder: but I deny the magistrates to be accounted amongst the common order of men: for they are the ministers of God, by whome hee executeth his owne iudgements. Adde also that Christ by these his woordes doeth expressly giue this power to them. For when he saith, that the murderers shall be put to death, it followeth that the sword is put into the iudges handes, that they might reuenge the death of them, which are vniustly slaine. It doeth sometimes fall out, that bloudy menne are punished by other meanes: yet this is the ordinary way, whereby the Lord woulde haue the cruell hercenetic of the wicked restrayned, least it should goe unpunished. Now, where some Canonittes dare be so bold as to breake into this impudency, to teach that the sword was not taken from Peter, but commaunded that he should keepe it vp, vntill opportunity should come for to draw it, hereby we doe perceiue how grossly and vntowardly those dogges doe abuse the word of God.

§ 3. *Thinkest thou that I cannot.* Now followeth that speciall reason, whereof I made mention a litle before. For Christ declareth that hee hath at hand a farre better manner of defence and more lawfull, but that the will of the father must be obeyed. For this is the summe, sith that by the eternall counsell of God hee was appoynted for a sacrifice, and the same was witnessed by the Oracles of the scriptures, it must not bee resisted. So the rashnesse of Peter is condemned by an other circumstance, in that he endeuoureth not onely to ouerthrow the heauenly decree, but also to stoppe vppe the way against the redemption of mankind. Not onely Peter doeth draw his sword vnlawfully, but the disciples were foolish and madde. and they beeing so fewe, and not meete for the wars, should attempt to doe any thing against a band of souldiers and so greata company.

Therefore the Lorde that he might the more evidently reprooue their folly, putteth this comparison, if he should seeke for defence for preservation of his life, hee had not onely eleuen Angelles ready, but a great and inuincible army: therefore where as he calleth not the Angelles for helpe, much lesse would he mooue a stirre without consideration, where no good were to be hoped for. For it woulde no more auaille to haue the disciples to make a stirre, then if a fewe frogges shoulde make a noyse. But some interpreters doe search here in vaine, howe Christe coulde obtayne Angelles of his father, by whose decree it was that hee shoulde die. For these thinges are contrary one to the other, that he should deliuer his sonne naked and vnarmed to death (because it was so necessary and once appoynted) and yet that he might bee mooued with prayers to sende him succours.

But Christes speech was conditional, that hee had a much better meanes for the defence of his life, if the will of the father were not against it. So all the repugnancy is taken away: for Christ therefore abstayned from praying to his father, because that hee was sure of his decree to the contrary. Hereof yet is this profitable doctrine gathered, that they doe iniury to God, whiche doe flie to vnlawfull meanes vnder pretence of necessitie. If any man doth want riches and helpes that are lawfull, he runneth headlong to the wicked counsels and sinfull endeouours: namely because that few doe attend vpon the secret counsell of God which onely should be sufficient to giue vs rest. If we bee in daunger, because the ende appeareth not vnto man, wee imagine this or that, as if there were no Angels in heauen, which the scripture so oft saith was appoynted to watch for our preseruatiō, Heb. 1. 14. And so we doe deprive our selues of their helpe. Whosoener are throwne headlong by their owne vnquietnesse and too much doubtfullnes, that they doe put their hands to remedy their euils by meanes forbidden, it is euident that they doe renounce the prouidence of God.

54. *How then should the scripture be fulfilled.* Christ by this saying declarereth, that he will not attempt to auoyde death, to the which hee knewe that the father called him. Hee had no neede of the Scripture to learne out of them that it was appoynted of God for him then to die, but because that mortall men doe not vnderstand what God hath determined with himselfe, vntill hee shall reueale it by his worde, Christe hauing respecte to his disciples, hath good cause to alledge that testimony, whiche God had ginen of his will. Wee know what euill soeuer doth befall vs, to be sent of God: but because wee are doubtfull of the successe, in seeking the remedies which hee alloweth; we doe not arise against his power: but where his will is found, then to rest. But though Christe heere doth onely teach, that hee should patiently suffer death, because that the scriptures doe testifie that it should be: yet the vse of this doctrine reacheth further, namely that the scripture is a fittē bridle for the taming of the stubbornnesse of the flesh. For to this ende doth God shewe vnto vs what his pleasure is, that he might keepe vs in obedience to his will. Therefore Paule attributeth these properties to the scripture, that it may instruct vs to patience, and helpe vs in aduersity, so much as there shall be neede of comfort. Christ after Luke dooth reprove his disciples in fewe wordes, *Suffer henceforth*: but yet hee doth sharply inuey against their boldnes, because they enterprised to enter into a damnable offence, though withall he putteth them in hope of forgiveness, if their wicked heate being cooled, they shall proceede no further.

LX. 51. *And he touched his eare.* Peter by his sonde zeale had brought a great infamy vpon his master and his doctrine. And it is not to bee doubted but that Satan by his subtilty attempted to burden the Gospel with this reproach for euer, as if that Christ had kept cutters and tumultuous companions to make innouations. I doe therefore thinke this to be the cause, why Christ healed this wounde, whiche hee had giuen. But the enemies were horribly and wonderfully astonished, that were nothing moued at the sight of so great a myracle. Yet it is lesse meruaile that they sawe not the power of Christ shewed in the person of another, when as they being throwne prostrate by his worde, yet ceased not their rage.

This.

This is the spirit of giddines, wherewith Sathan bewitcheth the reprobate, when as they are blinded by the Lord. In that seruant especially who was healed, there appeareth a notable example of vnthankfullnes. For that he was neither ouercome by the diuine power of Christ, that he might repent him of his hardnesse, nor wonne by the benefit of an enemy to become a disciple. For the Moonkes doe fondly imagine that he was healed also in minde, least the works of Christe shoulde haue bene vnperfect: as if that the goodnes of God were not dayly shewed euen vpon the vnworthy.

M A T. 55. As it were against a sheefe. Christ in these words expostulateth with his enemies, which doe execute their enuie vpon him, came furnished with great troupes. For this is the meaning, what neede was it to haue such furniture of weapons against me, as if some theefe were to be taken? For I alwayes liued amongst you vnarmed and peaceably, when I taught in the temple, I might haue bene taken easily without any force of soldiours. But though he complaineth of their malice, because they doe violently runne vpon him, as vpon a seditious man: yet againe he pricketh their euill conscience, because that with their captaine the traitour, they came vpon him, but fearefully and with many signes of their distrust.

56. But all this was done. The other two doe report this somewhat otherwise. For that which Matthewe reporteth in his owne person, Marke seemeth to attribute to Christ. Luke also vseth diuerse wordes, *that this shoulde be their houre and their power of darknes*: Yet the counsell of the holy Ghost is certeine, whatsoeuer the wicked imagined, nothing at all was doone without the allowance and prouidence of God. For, as it was sayd before, God hath spoken nothing by his Prophetes, but that which hee hadde with himselfe determined. Here therefore we are taught first, though Sathan triumph in his vnbridled lust with all the wicked, yet the hande of God shall alwayes gouerne, so that he will draw them against their willes whether he will. Secondly we are taught, though the wicked doe fulfill, that which is foretold in the Scripture, yet because that God doth not vse them as lawfull ministers, but directeth them by his secret power whether they woulde not, they shall not bee excusable, and when God shall iustly vse their malice, the faulte shall rest vpon themselves. In the meane season let vs note that Christ spake this, that he might take away the offence, which otherwise had not a little troubled the weake, when they should see him vexed so reproachfully. And his purpose was not onely to prouide for his disciples, but also to beate downe the pride of his enemies, least they should triumph as if they had gotten the victory. Therefore he saith in Luke, *that it is their time*: whereby he declareth that the Lord alloweth them this liberty for a short time. *And the power of darknes*. is taken for the deuil, which would againe auail: not a litle for the ouerthrowing of their glory. For howsoeuer they shall lift vp themselves, yet Christe teacheth that they are but the deuilles slaues, Further, when all things are confusedly mixed together, and the deuil by scattering abroad his darknes, doth seeme to overthrow the whol order of the world, lette vs knowe that the prouidence of God dooth shine aboue in heauen, so that at the length hee will set in order those things, whiche are nowe disordered: and therefore lette vs learne to lift vp the eyes of faith to that brightnes. In
that

that all the disciples are saide to flye, heere againe may be gathered, how much readier they were rashly to fight, then to follow the maister.

M A R. 51. *A certaine young man.* Whereof it should come to passe that some should dreame, that this young man should be Iohn, I know not, neyther is it greatly to be regarded: this doth rather appertaine to the matter, to consider to what end Marke should report this hystorie. And I doe thinke that he did it to this ende, that wee might knowe that the wicked went forward tumultuously without shame and modesty (as the cōmon vse is in such lewd attempts) so that the young men tooke this man, to them a straunger, & suspected of no crime, so that he could scarce escape their handes naked. For it is probable that the young man, of whome mention is made, being a fauourer of Christe, hearing of a tumult in the night, with out his clothes, onely couered with linen, came soorth, either that he might discouer their conspiracies, or at the least shew some duty of piety. That certainly which I touched euen now is to bee seene, that the wicked went forward with extreame violence, when as they spared not the poore young man, who at that noyse came halte naked out of his bed.

Matth. 26.

Marke 14.

Luke. 22.

57. And they tooke Iesus, and led him to Caiaphas, the highe priest, where the Scribes and the Elders were assembled.

58. And Peter followed him a farre off vnto the high Priestes hall, and went in, and sate with the seruants to see the end.

59. Now the high priestes and the elders, & all the whole counsell, sought false witnesse against Iesus to put him to death.

60. But they found none, and thogh many false witnesses came yet founde they none, but at the last came two false witnesses.

61. And sayde, this man said, I can destroy the temple of God, and build it in three dayes.

53. So they led Iesus away to the high priest, & to him came all the high priestes, and the Elders, and the Scribes.

54. And Peter followed him a farre off, euen into the hall of the high priest, and sate with the seruants, and warmed himselfe at the fire. 55. And the hie priestes, & all the counsell sought for witnesse against Iesus, to put him to death but found none.

56. For many bare false witnesse against him, but their witnesse agreed not together.

57. Then there arose certaine, & bare false witnesse against him, saying, 58. We heard him say, I wil destroy this temple made with handes, and wthin three dayes I will build an other made without handes. 59. But their witnesse yet agreed not together.

54. Then tooke they him, and led him, & brought him to the high Priestes house, and Peter followed a farre off.

Luke holdeth an other manner of course in settinge downe this hystorie, then Matthew and Marke doe. But the diuersity which is betweene them, wee will endeuour to reconcile in place conuenient. In the meane season it is good briefly to touch those thinges, which are woorthy to bee noted in Mathewe and Markes wordes. Firste, that the offence of the Crosse may be

be taken away, the profit must be considered, which the humbling of christ hath gotten for vs: for so it shall come to passe, that the goodnes of God, which is incomparable, and the efficacy of his grace shall abolish by his brightnesse whatsoever deformity and reproachfulnesse there shall bee in it: it was a vile thing, according to the flesh, that the sonne of God should bee taken, bound and kept captiue: but when we consider that wee by his bandes are set free from the tyranny of the deuill, and from the guiltines which held vs bound before God, the offence is not onely taken away, whereat our fayth might stumble, but in steede thereof succedeth the wõderfull grace of God, who esteemed so much of our deliuerance, that he deliuered his onely begotten sonne to the wicked to be bound. This also is a notable pledge of the singular loue of god towards vs, in that he spared not him selfe, but willingly tooke the bands vpon his owne flesh, that he might deliuer our soules from bands which are much worse.

57. *They led him to Caiaphas,* Though the greater iurisdiction, as they call it, was taken away from the Iewes, yet thereremained some remnauntes of that iudgement, which the lawe gaue to the hie Priest, Deu. 17. 8. so some small correctiõ was left, when the meere empire was taken away. For this cause christ was carryed to the hie Priest to be examined: not that the least sentence of iudgement shoulde be giuen against him at that iudgement seate, but that hee being condemned in their iudgement, the Priestes might then carry him before the gouernour Caiaphas, the priest, was otherwise called Iosephus, who as Iosephus the hystoriographer sayeth in his 18. booke, had the hie priesthood giuen him by Valerius Cratus the president of Iudea, when Simon the Sonne of Camithus was remoued from that honour. But his surname is only set downe by the Euangelists, because it may be the same was the more cõmonly knowne, and more renowned. Matthew sayeth that the priestes came together to Caiaphas house, not that they were gathered together nowe before Christe was brought thither at midnight: but because the place was appointed, that the message being heard, they might with speede halten thither very early in the morning: though we saw euen now that some of the priestes were abroad with the souldiers in the night at the taking of Christ. But otherwhere wee haue often seene that the Euangelistes are not so curious as to obserue the order of the time. Certainly in this present place they hadde no other purpose, then to shew that the sonne of God was oppressed by a wicked faction of a whole counsell. And here is a horrible and feareful sight set before our eyes. For there was not at that time in any other place either a temple of God, or a lawfull worship, or a face of a Church then at Hierusalem: the hie priest was a figure of the only mediatour betweene God and men: they which were present with him in the counsell, represented the whole Church of God: yet they all conspire together to extinguish the onely hope of saluation. But because that Dauid had prophesied of the same, as it is set downe in the Psal. 118. 22. That the stone reiected by the builders, yet neuertheless shoulde become the head of the corner: also it was spoken of before by Iesaiah, chap. 8. 14. that the God of hosts should be a stone of offence to all the people of Israel, whereat they should stumble: it was well foreseene by the Lord, least that such impiety of men should trouble the soules of the saythfull.

59. *They sought for false witness.* The Euangelistes in these wordes doe
note

note, that the priests did mind nothing lesse, then to inquire out the cause, that the matter being well tryed, they might discern what was right. For this was their determination before to destroy christ: now they do only seeke the reason of destroying him. But it cannot be that there should be any place left for equitie, whereas the cause was not knowne before. And in that they gaue not ouer when they found not that, which they hoped for, their blinde obstinacy is the better discerned. Therefore in that blindness of their rage, the innocency of the sonne of God appeared yet euidently, so that the devils themselves might know that an innocent went to death. Further, it is to bee noted that they are called false witnesses, not which do vtter a lye coined of nothing, but they which doe quarrellingly peruert words well spoken, & doe wrest them to make them to be a crime: and such an example there is here expressly set downe of the ouerthrow and new building of the Temple. Christ had said, that when the Temple of his body should be destroyed, he would raise it againe the third day: now the false witnesses do not imagine any new deuise, but they doe depraue his wordes, as if that he should boast of vsing some delusions in building the Temple. But because the quarrell was light, and of no weight, it may hereby be readily gathered, how greatly the Priests & Scribes were blinded with their madnes, who yet without any colour do desire that Christ should die.

Math. 26.

Marke. 14

Luke. 2.2.

62. Then the chiefe Priest arose & said to him answerest thou nothing? what is thy matter, that these men doe witnesse against thee? 63 But Iesus held his peace: the chiefe priest answered, & sayd to him, I charge thee by the living god that thou tell vs if thou bee the Christ? 64. Iesus said to him, thou hast said it neuertheles I say vnto you hereafter shall ye see the son of man sitting at the right hand of the power of god & come in the clouds of the heauen. 65. Then the hie priest rent his clothes, saying hee hath blasphemed what haue wee any more neede of witnesses? behold nowe ye haue heard his blasphemy. 66. What thinke ye? they answered & said, he is worthy to die. 67. The spat they in his face & buffeted him: & other smote him with their rods saying, prophesie to vs O christ who is he that smote thee.

60. Then the hie Priest stood vp amongst them, and asked Iesus saying answerest thou nothing? what is the matter that these doe beare witnesse against thee? 61. But he held his peace, & answered nothing: againe the hie Priest asked him and said art thou Christ, the son of the blessed? 62. And Iesus said, I am he, and ye shall see the sonne of man sit at the right hand of the power of God, & come in the clouds of heauen. 63. Then the hie Priest rent his clothes and sayde. what haue wee any more neede of witnesses?

64. Yee haue heard the blasphemy: what thinke ye? And they all condemned him, to be worthy of death.

65. And some beganne to spit at him, and to couer his face, and to beate him with fistes and to say vnto him, prophesie, and the sergeants smote him with their rods.

63. And the men that held Iesus mocked him, and strooke him. 64. And when they had blindfolded him, they smote him on the face, and asked him saying, prophesie who it is that smote thee? 65. And many other things blasphemously spake they against him. 66. And as soone as it was day the Elders of the people and the hie priests and the Scribes came together and led him into their counsel. 67. Saying, art thou the Christ? tel vs. And he said vnto them if I tel you you will not beleuee it.

68. And if also I aske you ye will not answere me, nor let me goe,

69. Hereafter shall the sonne of man sit at the right hand of the power of God.

70. Then said they all, art thou then the son of God and hee said to them, ye say that I am. 71. Then said they, what neede wee any further witnesse: for wee our selues haue heard it of his mouth.

62. *Then the cheife priest arose.* It is certaine that Christ held his peace when he was charged by false witnessies, not only because they were vnworthy to be refuted, but because that he did not seeke nowe to bee deliuered, knowing that the houre was come. Yet Caiaphas triumpheth vpon his silence, as if that hee held his peace as one conuicted, as they are wont, which know themselves guiltie. But it is great wickednes, that they should charge christ to be faulty: because there be, which doe witness against him. For this question, *What doe these men witness against thee?* is as much as if he should haue saide, howe commeth it to passe, that these do set against thee, but because that religion compelleth them? For they are not offended against thee without a cause. As if that he were ignorant that they were suborned by fraud: but thus doe the wicked rage without all shame, when they haue power and force with them. But Christe helde his peace againe, not onely because it was a vaine obiection, but because that hee being appointed to bee a sacrifice, hadde cast off all care of defending of himselfe.

63. *I charge thee by the liuing God.* The high Priest thought this noe crime to be sufficient to condemne Christ, if he would professe himselfe to be the Christ. But when all men gloried that they hoped to be redeemed by Christ, this was first to be sought, whether hee was so or no. They durst not bee so bold as to say that there was no Christ, by whose hand the people should be deliuered. Iesus commeth forth amongst them with the title of Christ, why do they not attend to the matter it selfe? why doe they not examine the signes, whereby they might haue proceeded to a right iudgement? But because they had once determined to destroy Christ, they are content with this pretence of sacriledge, that hee tooke vpon him the glory of the Godhead. And yet with an oath Caiaphas doth so examine the matter, as if that the same being thoroughly proued, he had bene readie to giue place, and yet his whole minde is possessed with a peruerse hatred and contempt of Christ: for so is hee blinded with pride and ambition, that they take it for granted, as if the matter were so plaine, that without inquisition of the right, they had iust cause of condemnation in their hand.

It may also be gathered by the words of Caiaphas, that the Messias had this notable name amongst the Iewes, that they would call him the Sonne of God. For he had not any other occasion, then the common maner of speech to stirre him to moue this question. And truly the scripture declared vnto them, that he was as well the sonne of God, as the Sonne of Dauid. And Caiaphas seemeth to vse this Epithite, eyther to feare Christ, or to make him the more to be enuied: as if he should haue sayd, see whether thou art run: for thou canst not say, that thou art Christ, but that thou must withall challenge the name of the sonne of God, wherewith the scripture adorneth him. That in Marke appertaineth to the same purpose, where *Blessed* is vsed for God. For that fained reuerence did more presse Christ, then if he had prophaned the holy name of God.

64. *Thou hast sayde it.* There is another answer set downe by Luke, wherein Christe reprooueth the malice of the Priestes, because they doe not aske the question, for that they would knowe. *You will not beleue* (sayth hee) *if I should tell you:* In the which wordes he declareth, that if hee should proue himselfe to bee the Christe a hundred wayes, yet that hee should so preuaile nothing

nothing amongst the obstinate. For they had not onely heard, but also seene with their eyes the miracles, which though Christ held his peace, shoulde declare his heavenly and diuine power, and also should proclaime him to bee the Redeemer promised in times past. Then is a confession added, which though it be reported by Mathew, in mo words, yet the sense is all one. Therefore Iesus sayth, that hee is the Christ, not that he might thereby escape death, but rather that hee might inflame the rage of his enemies against him. And because that then in that base estate hee was despised and almost brought to nothing, he foretelleth that at the length in his time he will come with kingly maiestie, that they should feare him as a iudge, whom they cannot abide to acknowledge for the Sauour. The meaning therefore is, that they were greatly deceiued, if by their present beholding of him, they should iudge what he were. for it behooued him to be humbled and brought almost to nothing, before he should appeare adorned with the ensignes and magnificall glory of his kingdome. Hence also may a profitable doctrine be drawne, which reacheth further. For whence cometh the great securitie, which the wicked is in? whereof become they so forward to rebell, but because the crucified Iesus, is not of any great account amongst them? They are therefore called back to that horrible iudgment, which by their vnseensblenes they shal not escape. And though they scoffe at *þ* which is sayd of the comming of Christ, as at a fable, yet the iudge himselfe doeth not in vaine cite them to his iudgement seat, and he commandeth them to bee cited by the preaching of his Gospell, that they may be thereby made the more inexcusable. But this forewarning is for the speciall profite of the faithfull, that now with the eyes of hope they may seeke for Christ in heauen, sitting at the right hand of the father, and may patiently waite vntill he come, and withall be sure that the vngodly doe not in vaine list vppe themselues against him in his absence. for they shall be compelled to see him comming aboue from heauen, whom now they doe not onely despise, but also tread downe in their pride. The metaphor in the word *right hand* should be well knowne: for it is often founde in the scriptures. And Christ is saide to sit at the right hand of the father, because that hee is appoynted cheife king, who shoulde in his name gouerne the world, as if hee held the second seate of honour and empire from him. Christe therefore sitteth at the right hand of the father, because he is his vicar, & this is therefore called the right hand of power, because that God doth now by the hand of his sonne execute his power, and will in the last day iudge the world.

65. *Then the high priest rent his clothes.* Hereby we see how those myracles, whereby Christe testified his diuinity profited nothing amongst these wicked men. But it is no maruaile that the sonne of God in the base estate of a seruante should be despised of them, which were touched with no care of the promised saluation: for except they had altogether cast off all feeling of godlines, in their lamentable estate, it was meete for them carefully to waite for the redeemer. Now, when they refuse him offered vnto them without inquirie, do they not as it were extinguish as much as in the lieth, all the promises of God? And first the hie priest pronounceth Christ to be a blasphemmer, then, they do all subscribe to it. And this renting of clothes doth plainly declare how boldly & wickedly the profaine contenters of god do pretend a false zeale, And this was a thing meet for the

the high priest, when he heard the name of God reproachfully prophaned not onely to burne within and to be vexed, but to giue an open signe of detestation: but refusing the examination of it, he preposterously fained the blasphemie of himselfe. Yet in the meane season the faithlesse hypocrite by taking vpon him another persō, doth reach the childre of God, how much they shuld be grieved at blasphemies & by his example hee condemneth the vile sluggishnes of them which are no more moued at the prophaning of religion, then if they heard iesters to scoff at fantasticall trifles, 67. Then spake they in his face. Luke hath either inuerted the order of the history, or els the Lord suffred so great reproches twise & the latter seemeth probable to me. Yet I do not doubt that the officers tooke the more courage, the more insolently to spit vpon Christ, & to strike him after they saw that he was appointed to death by y former iudgement of the counsell. But at these reproches tended to this ende, that he shoulde seeme to be nothing lesse like, then to bee the prince of the prophets, who could not keepe himselfe frō blowes, when he had a vaile put ouer him. But the prouidence of God turned this disdainfull dealing to a far other end, for y face of christ defiled with blowes & spitting restoreth that image in vs, which by sin was corrupt and blotted out.

Math. 26.

Mark. 14.

Luke. 22.

69. Peter sate without in the hal, & a maid came to him, saying, thou also wast with Iesus of Galyle.

70. But he denied before the saying, I wot not what thou saist. 71. And when he went out into the porch another maid saw him, & saide vnto them that were there this man was also with Iesus of Nazaret.

72. And againe he denied with an oath, saying, I know not the man. 73. So after a while came vnto him they that stood by & said vnto Peter, surely thou art also one of the: for euē thy speech bewraiethe thee. 74. Then began he to curse himselfe, and to sweare, saying, I knowe not the man, and immediately the cocke crew.

75. Then Peter remembered the wordes of Iesus which had said vnto him, before the cocke crowe, thou shalt deny me thrise: so he went out & wept bitterly.

66. And as Peter was beneath in the hal, there came one of the maides of the high priest. 67. And when shee saw Peter warming himself she looked on him, & sayde, thou wast also with Iesus of Nazaret. 68. But he denied it, saying, I know him not neither wot I what thou sayest. Then hee went out into the porch & the cocke crew.

69. Then a maide saw him againe, and began to say to them that stood by: this is one of the. 70. But he denied it againe & anon after they that stood by, said againe to Peter surely thou art one of them for thou art of Galilee and thy speech is like.

71. And he began to curse & swear, saying, I know not this man, of whom ye speake. 72. Then the second time the cocke crew, & Peter remembered the word & Iesus had said vnto him, before the cocke crowe thrise, thou shalt deny me thrise, and wayting that with himselfe, he wept.

55. And when they had kindled a fire in the mids of the hall and were set down together, Peter also sat downe among them.

56. And a certaine maid beheld him as he sate by the fire: and having wel looked on him said, this man was also with him.

57. But he denied his saying with ome. I know him not. 58. And after a little while another maide saw him, & said thou art also of them: but Peter said, man I am not.

59. And about the space of an houre after a certaine other affirmed, saying, verely even this man was with him: for hee is also a Galilean.

60. And Peter said, man, I know not what thou saist. And immediately while he yet spake the cocke crew.

61. Then the Lord turned backe & looked vpon Peter & Peter remembered the wordes of the Lord howe hee had said vnto him before the cocke crowe, thou shalt deny me thrise.

62. And Peter went out and wept bitterly.

The fall of Peter which is here set downe is a notable spectacle of our infirmity. Againe, in his repentance there is set before vs an example of the goodnes & mercy of God worthy to be remembred. And so the hystory which is reported of this one, containeth doctrine common to the whole church, & that very profitable, partly to teach them: which stand carefully to feare, partly to raise vp thē that are false with the hope of forgiveness. And here is first to be noted, how vnadvisedly Peter did, when he entered into the hie priests hall. It was a point of piety to follow his maister, but sith that he was warned how hee should fall a way, hee should rather lie hid in some corner, least that he should cast himselfe into danger of sinning. So it doeth befall oft times, that the faithfull vnder the colour of vertue do cast themselves into temptations. Wherefore let vs pray to the Lord, that he would keepe vs in with the bridle of his spirit, least that wee going out of our calling, should presently be punished. We must also pray vnto him so oft as we do enterprise to doe any thing, that hee would not suffer vs to faint in the midst of our labours, or in the beginning of our worke: but that hee would strengthen vs from heauen vnto the end. The feeling of our infirmities should be no cause to make vs slouthfull: but it should restrain our rashnes frō attempting any thing about our calling: and also to stir vs vp to prayers, that God, who hath giuen the gift to begin well, would also giue the grace of perseuerance.

69. *A maid came to him.* Heere wee see that there is no neede of any great conflict, nor of many bands of men, or deuices to ouerthrow a man: for who-soeuer is not vpholden by the hand of God, shall by and by fall at every small blast, or at the noyse of the falling of a leafe. Certainly Peter hadde as great courage as any of vs, and euen now hee had shewed a strange token of a stout minde (though in a preposterous boldnesse:) yet hee tarrieth not vntill hee should bee drawne before the iudgement seate of the hie Priest, or vntill the enemies by force should threaten death: but feared with the voyce of a damsel, he forth with denieth his maister. And, but late he seemed to himselfe to bee a soldiour inuincible euen to death. Therefore let vs remember that our forces are so far from being able to beare, that they fall away at the onely shadow of a battell. But so the Lord doth pay a iust reward for our faithlesnes, when he vnarmeth vs, & weakeneth vs, so that we shal be afraid of nothing, after we haue cast away his feare. For if the perfect feare of God had flourished in the heart of Peter, he had beene a fortres inuincible. but now being naked and vnarmed seareth when he is yet far frō danger. 70 *He denied before them all.* This circumstance maketh the fault the greater, that Peter was not afraid to deny his maister before so great a company of witnesses. And the holy Ghost would of purpose note this, that the very sight of mé might encourage vs to hold the cōfession of faith. For if wee deny Christe before weakelinges, because they being shaken by our example, do wax faint, we do as much as in vs lieth, destroy so many soules: but if before the wicked cōtemners of God & enemies of the Gospell, wee defraude Christe of the testimony due vnto him, we doe make his holy name to be scorned of all men. To be short, as a bold and free confession doeth strengthen all the godly, and maketh all vnbeleeuers ashamed: so the falling away draweth with it a publike ruine to faith, and a reproach to sound doctrine in the Church, Therefore the higher place that any manne is in, the more diligently hee

must take heede to himselfe : for he cannot fall from his estate, but that hee shall doe the more harme. Further, the manner of denyall, which is here set downe, doeth euidently declare that the miserable sophisters do auaille nothing by their ambiguous and shifing answers, if they bee at any time called to yeeld a reckoning of their faith. Peter doth not expressly abiure the whole doctrine of the gospel : he only denieth that he knew the man : but because that he doth indirectly bury the light of redemption offered vnder the person of Christe, hee is condemned of vile and filthy treachery. He had heard the Lord say but a little before, that confession of sayth was a sacrifice acceptable to God. Therefore the denyall cannot be excused, which defraudeth God of his lawfull worshippe, & Christ of his honour. Therefore let vs learne that the leauing of the simple & free confession of the sayth, is a defrauding him of his lawfull testimony.

71. *Another maide saw him* By Marks words it may rather be gathered, that it was the same maide: he doth not certainly expresse any other besides the former: yet there is noe repugnancy in it: for it is probable that that which one had spoken, flew abroad through all their mouthes, so that as the first should speake of it to many, & oft, so others withall came forth to confirme that iudgement and to spread it further. And Iohn reporteth that the question was not demanded the second time by a maide, but of a multitude of men. Whereby it appeareth that the speach which came from the damsel, was take vp by the men which stood by, & they assaulted Peter. There is an other difference betweene Marke and the other three : for hee maketh mention of the crowing of the cocktwise, but the other do say that the cock then crew, when that Peter had denied the Lord thrise. But this vnlosing of the knot is not heard, for Marke reporteth nothing contrary to the hystory of the others : but that that which they doe passe ouer in silence, he deliuereth more plainly: I do thinke that Christ said to Peter, before the cock crow, that he ment such a crowing as contained many courses doubled in it. For the cockes do not only crow once, but they do often iterate their crowings: yet that is called but one cocks crowing, whil his done at one watch. Therefore Mat, Luke & Iohn do say that Peter denied the Lord thrise before the end of the cockes crowing: Marke doth more distinctly set down one circumstance: namely that in so short space of time Peter was drawne to deny him thrise, and being warned by the first crowing, hee repented not. Further, we will not say, that there is contrariety betweene prophane wryters, if some one shoulde rehearse those matters, which are left vntouched by others. Therefore though that which is reported by Marke doth differ, yet it is not repugnant to the others. And this is worthy to be nored, that Peter after he could not escape with a simple deniall, hee doubleth that offence by putting an oath to it : also a little after, when he is more vehemently vrged, he fallieth to cursing : whereby we doe gather that after a sinner doth once fall, he is then caried to worse & worse. So they which doe begin at small sinnes, doe after runne headlong into most filthy and heynous offences, which they doe at the first abhorre. And this is the iust vengeance of God, after wee are deprived of the helpe of the holy Ghost, to grant Sathan liberty to vse his tyranny ouer vs, so that we being wholly tyed & bound vnto him, he may cast vs hither and thither. And that doth especially fall out in the deniall of the sayth : for where any manne for feare of the

Crosse doth turne away from the pure profession of the Gospell, if he seemeth not yet to haue satisfied the enemies, hee runneth on further: and that which he durst not confesse sincerely, hee doth without any couerings altogether abjure. Then is this also to bee obserued, that Peter fell thrise almost in a moment: for heereby it appeareth how slippery and ready wee are to fall, as oft as Satan vrgeth vs: and truly there will bee no measure of falling, except the Lord by his outstretched hand shall holde vs backe. After that the force of the grace of the spirit was quenched in Peter, as any man that came by him hadde asked him of Christ, he was ready to make a hundred, yea, a thousand denials. Therefore though it was most filthy for him to fall thrise, yet the Lord spared him, by restraining the tongues of his enemies, least they shoulde moue moe troubles. So also it is necessary at this day, that hee shoulde bridle Sathan, least hee should ouerwhelme vs with innumerable tentations. For though hee ceaseth not to beate vs with many engines, yet if the Lorde, prouiding for our infirmities, should not beate backe the force of his fury, wee should haue to strue with an vnmeasurable heape of tentations. Therefore wee haue great cause to prayse in this behalfe the mercy of the Lord, in that he suffereth not our enemies to haue scarce the hundred part of his pleasure of vs.

74. *Then he began to curse.* By this third denial the infidelity of Peter towards his master breaketh vp into a great heape. For not satisfied with swearing he leapeth ouer to cursing, wherein he yeeldeth both his body and soule to destruction. For hee prayeth that the curse of God may light vpon him, if hee knewe Christe. And this is asmuch, as if hee should haue sayd, let me come to an euill end, if I haue any thing to doe with the saluation of God. Wherein the goodnes of Christ is so much the more to bee had in admiration, for curing his disciple raised from so deadly a ruine. But this place dooth teach, that it is not blasphemy against the spirit, if any man through the infirmity of the flesh should fall, though hee should deny the knowne truth. Peter truly had heard by the mouth of the Lord how detestable a treachery it is to deny him before me: and how horrible a vengeance doth remaine for them before God and his Angelles, who for a slouthfull feare of the crosse doe forsake the confession of the faith: for he had a little before preferred and not in vaine, death or any torment before the denial of Christ. Therefore now wittingly and beeing before admonished, he casteth himselfe headlong, yet after he obtaineth forgiveness. Whereof it followeth that he sinned of infirmity and not of an incurable malice. For hee would willingly haue yeelded vnto Christe that duty of piety due vnto him, if the sparkes of right affection had not beene quenched by feare.

75. *And Peter remembered.* At the crowing of the cocke CHRIST also looked vpon him, as Luke witnesseth. For hee hadde first despised the crowing of the cocke, as wee haue heard out of Marke. Therefore it was meete that Christe shoulde looke backe vpon him, that hee might come againe vnto himselfe. And euery one of vs doe prooue the same to bee true in our selues: For which of vs doth not carelessly passe by with deafe eares, I doe not say diuerse and manifold songes of birdes (which yet doe stirre vs to the glorifying of GOD:) but the woorde of God, whiche dooth euidently and plainly resound vnto vs in the doctrine of the lawe and the Gospell: And

our mindes are possessed with such a brutish blockishnes not onely one day, but perpetually, vntill hee shall vouchsafe to looke vpon vs, who alone conuerteth the harts of men. Yet it is worth the labour to note that it was no common manner of looking: (for he had looked before vpon Iudas, who yet became nothing the better thereby) but in looking vpon Peter, hee ioyned the secret efficacy of the spirit with his eyes, and so with the beames of his grace he peared into his heart. Wherefor let vs know as oft as any mā shal fal, he cā not begin to repent except the Lorde looke vpon him. *He wept bitterly.* It is likely to be true that Peter went out for feare, for he durst not weepe before witnessers: wherein hee yet againe shewed his infirmity, Whereby we doe gather that he deserued not forgiveness by satisfaction, but obtained the same of the fatherly fauour of God. And by this example wee are taught, though our repentance should halt, yet to hope well, because that God despiseth not a weake repentance so that it be sincere. In the meane while Peters secret teares doe witness his true repentance before God and the Angelles: for being withdrawne from the eyes of menne, hee doth set before him G O D and the Angels: and so these teares doe flow out of the innermost affection of the heart. The which is therefore to be noted, because that we doe see many which doe shedde teares very plentifully, so long as men doe looke vpon them, whose eyes in secret doe waxe dry. Further, it is not to be doubted but that ambition and hypocrisie doe cause many to shedde teares, which powre forth none, for feare of Gods iudgement. Yet it is demanded whether true repentance requireth teares. I doe answere, the faithfull doe oft with dry eyes mourne vnto the Lord, and confesse their fault, that they may obtaine forgiveness: but in hainous offences they are too too blockish & slouthfull, which are not wounded with sorrow and heauines, and are not ashamed euen to powre forth teares. Therefore the scripture after it findeth men guilty of sinnes, exhorteth them to sackcloth and ashes.

Matth. 27.

1. When the morning was come all the chiefe Priests, & the Elders of the people tooke counsell against Iesus, to put him to death.
2. And led him away bound, and deliuered him vnto Pontius Pylate, the gouernour.
3 Then, when Iudas, which betraied him sawe & he was condemned he repented himself & brought againe the thirty peeces of siluer to the chiefe Priestes and Elders.
4. Saying, I haue sinned, betraying innocent blood But they said, what is that to vs? looke thou to it.
5. And when he had cast downe the siluer peeces in the Temple, he departed & went out, & hang-ed himselfe 6. And the chiefe Priestes tooke & siluer peeces, and said, it is not lawfull for vs to put them into the treasure, because it is the price of blood.
7. And they tooke counsell and bough with them a potters field, for the buriall of straungers.

8. Where-

Marke. 15.

1. And aū in the dawninge & the Priests held a counsell with the Elders, and the whole counsel & bound Iesus & led him away and deliuered him to Pylate

Luke. 23.

1. Then the whole multitude of them arose, and led him vnto Pilate.

8. Wherefore that field is called the field of bloud
vntill this day.

9. (Then was fulfilled that which was spoken by Ie-
remias the Prophet saying: and they tooke thirty silver
peeces the price of him that was valued, whom they of
the children of Israel valued.

10. And they gave them for the potters field, as the
Lord appointed me.)

1. When the morning was come. When as the chiefe priests with his coun-
sell had examined Christe beefore about midnight, at the length at the rising of
the sunne they doe determine to bring him before the gouernour. And there-
in they doe obserue the forme of iudgement, least their hast should be suspected,
if they shoulde run to Pilate before the time, as in tumults they vse to doe. Yet
it is probable, sith that Christ was brought from their counsel, that they hadde
quickly consulted, and appoynted without any long delay what they would doe.
For it was said before, that what time Christe came out from them, he should
meete with Peter: namely, after the cockes crowing, and when it was nowe
neere day. Wherefore the Euangelistes doe not meane that they were remoued
out of their place but they do onely report that in the dawning of the day Christ
was iudged by them to death, neither slackted they any time in their bold execu-
ting of their wickednes, But that Luke sayd before, *that they were gathered in the
morning*, must not be expounded of their beginning, but of the last action which
is added afterwards: as if he should haue sayd, after the day appeared, because
the Lord had confessed himselfe to be the son of God, they gaue their sentence
of putting him to death. If they had had liberty to put to death, such was their
fury, that they all would haue laid outragious handes vpon him: but because
that Pilate had the authority of the iudgements of death, they are enforced to
descend to his iudgement seat: they onely doe seeke to catch him in a snare in
their former iudgement. For the stoning of Stephen fell out seditiously, as whe
things are in an vproare. But it was meete that the sonne of God should in so-
lemne maner bee condemned of an earthly iudge, that hee might blot out our
guiltines in heauen. 3. Then Iudas seeing. Mat. doth not by this aduerbe note
any certaine poynnt of time: for shortly after hee addeth, that Iudas because hee
saw the hie priests refuse the price of treason, did cast the same into the Temple.
But they came the next way out of Caiaphas house into the iudgement hall, &
there they staid vntill Christ was condemned. Therefore they were scarcely found
that day in the Temple: but because that hee spake of the tragical fury of the
counsell, he ioyned also withal the death of Iudas (wherein their blind obstina-
cy or iron hardnes dooth the better appeare.) And hee saith that Iudas was tou-
ched with repentance: not that he repented, but that he was displeased with the
heinous offence, which hee had committed: as God doth oftentimes open the
eyes of the reprobate, so that they beginne to feele their sinnes, and to abhorre
them. For, they which do earnestly sorrow, so that they doe repent, are not sayd
onely *Metamenein*, but also *Metanoein*, and thereof also *Metanoia*, which is a true
conuerfion of man vnto God. Iudas therefore conceived a loathsomnes and a
horror, not that he might turne himselfe vnto God, but rather that he being o-
uerwhelmed with dispaire, might bee an example of a man wholly forsaken of
the grace of God,

And Paul doth for good cause call that a godly and profitable sorrow. 2. Cor. 7. 10. which leadeth to repentance: but if any man shall stumble at the first enterance into the same, that confused & mishapen sorrow shall profit him nothing. But rather with this iust reuenge doth G. O. D. at the length plague the wicked, which haue stubbornly despised his iudgement, in that he doth deliuer them to bee tormented of Sathan without hope of comfort. True repentance is a disliking of sinne, conceiued of a feare and reuerence of God, which withall bringeth forth of it a loue and desire of righteousness. The vngodly are farre from this affection: for they would desire neuer to make an end of sinning: yea, they strue as much as lyeth in them, to delude both themselves and God, but their conscience tormenteth them with a blind horror against their wils, & they struing against the same: so that though they hate not their sinne, yet they feeble the same with sorrow & doubtfulness grieuous and troublesome vnto them. Hereof it cometh to passe that their sorrow is vnprofitable to them, because they doe not freely turne vnto God, neyther yet seeke to be better, but fast settled to their owne wicked desire, they pine away in that torment, which they cannot escape. By this meanes (as I sayd euen now) God reuengeth their obstinacy. For though God by chastising his elect hardly, doth when they strue against the same draw them vnto him, yet the wounds which he giueth, hee doth heale in time conuenient, so that they do willingly come to him, whose hand they know hath smitten the, & of whose wrath they are afraid. The former therefore do no lesse fly then feare the iudgement of God without the hatred of sinne: and so they being wounded with an incurable blow, do perish in the midst of their sorrowes. If Iudas had giuen eare to the admonition of Christ, there had beene yet place to repentance: but because that he had despised so louing a calling to saluation, he is deliuered ouer to serue Sathan, who should cast him headlong into desperati- on. But if the Papists taught truely in their schooles of repentance, then is there nothing wanting in Iudas, for in him may be found their whole definition. For heere is to bee seene both contrition of heart, and confession of mouth, and satisfaction of worke as they speake. Whereby we do gather that they do onely snatch at the barke: because they do that, which was the cheife conuersion of man to God, while the sinner broken with shame & feare renounceth himselfe, that he may yeelde himselfe to obey righteousness. 4. *What is that to vs?* Heere is described the sloth and blockishnes of the high priests, in that they being admonished by the fearefull example of Iudas, do not yet remember themselves. I grant that as hypocrites vse to flatter themselves, they had a colour for themselves in a readines, wherby they would distinguish between their cause & Iudas: For they thought themselves not partakers of the sin, though they had abused the treachery of the traitor. But Iudas doth not only confesse that he himselfe had sinned, but he aduoucheth the innocency of Christ: whereof it followeth that they sought the destructiō of a righteous mā, & therefore they wer guilty of a hainous murder. And it is not to be doubted but God would marke their consciences with a hot yron, which should discover their hidden poyson. But let vs learne so oft as we see the wicked terrified, to who we are any thing like, God they are so many prouocatiōs of vs to repentāce, by the neglect wherof the obstinate do double their fault. It is also to be noted God by the sin of mā they al were not absolved who

who entangled themselves by every way they could : and much lesse did the an-
hours of that wickednes preuaile to keepe theselues from the same vengeance,
by distinguishing themselves from their officers.

5. *He hanged himselfe.* Of this price doth Sathan sell his baites, wherewith
he allureth the wicked for a time, that he turneth them into madnesse, that they
willingly cutting theselues fro the hope of saluation, so that they shall not finde
comfort any other where, but in death. The 30. pieces of siluer wherewith Iudas
had betrayed as wel his own saluation, as Christe, he of himselfe casteth away,
though he might haue enioyed the same for any other man : & he doth not on-
ly deprive himselfe, but with the sacrilegious hire & price of the death of christ,
he also casteth away his life. So though that God should not stirre his hand, yet
the wicked are deceiued by their owne desires, that hauing their desires, they
doe not onely deprive themselves of those vaine goodes, but thereof they doe
rather make halters for themselves . But though they beecome their owne
slaughter men, by executing vengeance vpon themselves, they do mitigate and
diminish nothing of the wrath of God towards them.

6. *It is not lawfull to put them.* Heereby it doth plainly appeare that the hy-
pocrites only by seeking an outward shew do mocke with God. So that they
prophane not their treasury, they doe imagine themselves in all other things to
be pure: neither do they regard that wicked couenant, wherby they had no lesse
bound themselves to Gods vengeance then Iudas. If that were an hainous of-
fence to lay vp the price of blood in the holy treasury, why was it rather lawfull
to take the same from thence? For they had no riches but of the offerings of the
Temple, neither had they taken that from any other place, which now they do
doubt of as a thing polluted, to lay vp there againe. But from whence came this
pollution, but from themselves? Further, the more the wicked doe endeour to
couer their sinnes, so much the more doeth the Lorde apply the laying of them
open . They hoped that the sinne should be buried with an honest cloake,
if they should buy a barren fildes for the buriall of strangers. But the wonder-
full prouidence of God made the successe of this cleane contrary, so that the field
should be as it were an eternall memoriall of that treason which before was hid.
For they gaue not that place that name. but after that the matter was common-
ly knowne, by a common consent it was called the fildes of bloude: as if that
God had commaunded all menes tongues to speake of their reproach. And it
was a plausible matter to prouide for the buriall of strangers, if it should fall
out that any should die at Hierusalem, which came thither out of far countreys,
to offer sacrifice.

And because there was a portio of the Gentiles, I do not disallow that which
some olde men haue written, that by this token there was hope of saluation gi-
uen to the Gentiles, because that they were included in the price of the blood of
Christ. But because it is rather a subtile deuce then a sure, I leaue it as I finde
it *Corbana* is a Chalde word, deduced from the Hebrew word *Corban*, where-
of there is mention made other where.

9. *Then was fulfilled.* I doe graunte that I doe not knowe howe Hier-
emias name should creepe in , neither doe I much labour about it : the
the matter it selfe doeth evidently declare that the name of Hieremias was .

through error put in for Zachariah: For there is no such thing read in Hieremialh, or any thing that should come neare it. And that other place if it be not aptly applied, it may seeme to be badly wrested into another sense.

But if we hold that rule which the Apostles followed in citing of the Scripture, it shall be easie to be knowne, that it doth aptly agree to Christ, which is there wrytten. After that the Lord complained how long he supplied the office of a pastour in gouerning the people, that he bestowed his labour in vaine, hee sayeth that hee is compelled by wearisomnesse and trauaile to leaue his labour: therefore he breaking his shepherdes staffe, refuseth to bee any more a shepherde. He sayeth afterwarde when hee should require his wages, that there were giuen him thirtie peeces of siluer. In which wordes he declareth that hee was no lesse contemptuously accounted of by them, then if he had beene some base and vile labourer. For hee compareth the ceremonies and vaine deuices wherewith the Iewes recompenced his benefits to thirtie peeces of siluer, as vnto an vnmeet and a vile hire of a hearde or a labourer: therefore he commaundeth that they should be cast to the potter in the Temple: as if hee shoulde haue sayd. This their goodly gift, which should be no lesse reproachfull for mee to take, then contumelious for them to offer, lette them rather bestowe to buy tiles or bricke wherewith they may repayre the chinckes and holes of the Temple.

Nowe, the more certainly Christe appeared to bee the GOD of hostes, against whome the people was from the beginning malignant and vnthankfull: when he is reuealed in the flethe, it was meete that that which before was spoken figuratiuely, shoulde indeede and in visible manner be fulfilled in his person. Therefore, when by their malice he was compelled to bid them farewell, and that he should withdraw his labour from them as vnworthy, they valued him at thirtie pecies of siluer. And this contempt of the sonne of God was a great shew of their extreame wickednesse.

The price of him that was valued. Matthew reporteth not the wordes of Zachariah: because he doth only allude to the Metaphore, vnder the which the Lord there complaineth of the vnthankfulness of the people. Yet the sum and meaning is all one, when as the Iewes wholly ought themselves and all that they hadde vnto the Lord, it was not without reproch, that they sent him away with a seruile hyre: as if that he should deserue no more in gouerning them so many ages, then any hearde man should by one yeares labour. Therefore hee complaineth that he is valued at so vile a price, when as hee should bee inestimable. And in the ende, where he sayeth: *Whom they of the children of Israell valued,* is an indefinite manner of speech. Iudas had made a bargain with the preists, who did beare the name and person of all the people: so the Iewes setting him to sale, Christ was solde as it were by the voyce of a cryer. But it was a piece meete to be giuen to the potter.

10. *As the Lorde appointed mee.* Matthew by this clause declareth that this was done, not without the prouidence of GOD: for while they doe bende another way, they doe vnwillingly fulfill that which was Prophesied of olde. For howe could it bee, that it shoulde come in their mindes

to buy a field of a potter, if the Lorde had not bent their errour to execute his decree.

Math. 27.

Markc. 15.

Luke 23.

11. And Iesus stood before the gouernour & the gouernour asked him, saying: Art thou the king of the Iewes? Iesus saide vnto him: Thou sayest it.
12. And when he was accused of the chiefe priestes & elders, he answered nothing.
13. Then said Pilate vnto him: hearest thou not how many things they lay against thee?
14. But he answered not to one worde, in so much that the gouernour merueiled greatly.

2. Then Pilate asked him: art thou the king of the Iewes? And he answered and sayde vnto him: Thou sayest it.
3. And the hie priests accused him of many thinges.
4. Wherefore Pilate asked him againe, saying: Answerest thou nothing? Behold how many thinges they witnesse against thee.
5. But Iesus answered no more at all, so that Pilate merueiled.

2. And they began to accuse him, saying: We haue found this manne pervertinge the people and forbidding to paye tribute to Caesar, saying: that he is Christ a king.
3. Pilate asked him saying: Art thou the king of the Iewes? And he answered him and sayde: Thou sayest it.
4. Then said Pilate to the hie preists, and to the people I find no fault in this man.
5. But they were the more fierce, saying: He mooueth the people, teaching throughout al Iudea, beginning at Galilee, euen to this place.
6. Nowe, when Pilate hearde of Galilee, he asked whether the manne were a Galilean.
7. And when he knew that he was of Herodes iurisdiction, he sent him to Herode, which was also at Hierusalem in those dayes.
8. And when Herode sawe Iesus, hee was exceedingly glad: for he was desirous to see him a longe season, because hee had heard many thinges of him and trusted to haue seene some signe done by him.
9. Then questioned hee with him of many thinges but he answered him nothing.
10. The hie priestes also and Scribes stood foorth and accused him vehemently.
11. And Herode with his men of warre, despised him and mocked him and arrayed him in whyle, and sente him agayne to Pilate.
12. And the same daye Pilate and Herode were made friendes together, for before they were enemies.

11. And Iesus stood. Though this was an vncomely fighte, and farre differing from the dignitie of the Sonne of God, that hee shoulde be drawne to the iudgement seate of a prophane manne, and as an euill doer in bandes pleade for his life yet it must be remembred, that in the doctrine of the crosse (which is to the Grecians foolishnesse, and to the Iewes a stumbling block) consisteth our saluation. For the Sonne of God woulde stande bounde before an earthly iudge, & there abide the iudgement of death, that we being freed from guiltinesse, shoulde not doubt to come willingly to the celestiall throne of God.

Therefore,

Therefore, if wee consider what it profiteth vs, that Christ was iudged by Pilate, presently the reproach of so vnworthy a subiection shalbe wiped away. And certainly, the condemnation of Christ offendeth none but either proud hypocrites, or blockish and grosse contemners of God, which are not ashamed of their owne wickednesse. The Sonne of God therefore stood guilty before a mortall man, and suffered to bee accused and condemned, that wee might stand without feare before God. The enemies endeououred to lay an eternall infamie vpon him: but we must rather looke to the ende, whereto the prouidence of God directeth vs. If wee could remember how fearefull the tribunall seat of God should be, and yet that we could not be freed from thence, if Christ had not becōe guiltie vpon earth, it should neuer yrke vs to glory in his bonds. Again, as oft as wee doe heare that Christe stood before Pilate in heauy and sorrowfull estate, let vs thereby take occasion of comfort, that by vsing him as an intercessour, wee may come forth chearefully and boldly into the presence of God. To this also appertaineth, that whiche presently followeth of his silence: Christ held his peace when as the priestes vrged him on euery side, for that by his silence hee might open our mouthes. For hence commeth that notable power whiche Paule celebrateth, Rom. 8. 15. that wee may cry with full mouth *Abba father*: as I shall touch the same againe presently.

Art thou the king of the Iewes? Though they thought to ouerwhelme Christ with many and sundry faultes, yet it is probable that they tooke very malitiously the name of a king, that thereby they might procure him the more enuie with Pilate. Therefore by Luke it is set downe, that they found him *peruertering the people, and forbidding to giue tribute to Caesar, saying*. And there was no offence more odious then this before Pilate, who cared for nothing more, then to keepe the estate of the Empire quiet. It appeareth by Iohn, that the matter was diuersly handled: but by the whole course it dooth evidently appeare that this was the chiefe poynt of the accusation. Euen as Sathan also at this day endeuoureth vnder this pretence to bring the Gospell into hatred and suspition, as if that Christ by erecting his kingdome, should weaken all the Empires of the worlde, and should ouerturne the lawes of kings and magistrates. And kings for the most part are so blinded in their pride, that they thinke that Christ cannot raigne, but with the losse of their power. Therefore this alwayes is a very plausible action amongst them, wherewith Christ was once vniustly charged. Therefore Pilate neglecting all other accusations, doeth especially rest vpon the sedition: for if he had found Christe troubling any thing in the state of the common wealth, he had willingly condemned him without delay: this is the reason why hee asked him the question of the kingdome. And though according to our three Euangelistes, the answere of Christ is doubtful, yet by Iohn it may be gathered that Christ freely confessed, that which was objected: but with all he cleared himselfe of the offence, when he denied himselfe to be an earthly king. But because that it was not his purpose to vse diligence to purge himselfe, as the guiltie doe vse, the Euangelistes doe set downe halfe his answere: as if they shoulde haue sayde hee denied not but that hee was a king, yet the ouerthwart enemies noted the quarrell, wherewith they charged him vnderfledly.

12. *He answered nothing.* Why the Euangelistes should say that Christe held his peace, whose answer they reported euen now, this is the reason, because that when he was ready to make his defence, hee willingly refrained. Neither did he giue that answer before of the kingdome, because that he desired to be loosed, but onely that hee might shew himselfe to bee the redeemer promised in times past, before whome euery knee shoulde bowe. Pilate wondered at that patience, that Christ would willingly betray his innocency by holding his peace, when as he might readily haue refelled those colde and vaine quarrelles. The integrity of Christ was such, that it was manifest to the iudge without any defence. But Pilate wished that Christe shoulde not haue left his cause so vnanswered, that thereby with lesse enuy he might be set free. And thus farre was Pilate prayse woorthy for his equity, in that hee fauouring the innocency of Christe, vrged him to defend himselfe. But least that wee shoulde wonder at the silence of Christ as an absurd thing, as he did it, it behooueth vs to marke the counsell of God, who would that his sonne (whom he had ordained to be a sacrifice for the washing away of our sinnes) though he was pure of himselfe, yet should be condemned as guilty in our person. Therefore Christe then kept silence, that he might now become our patrone, and might free vs from guiltinesse by his intercession: he held his peace, that we might glory, that we by his grace are made righteous. And by this meanes was fulfilled that prophesie in Isa. 53. 7. that he should be ledde as a sheepe to the slaughter. Yet in the meane season hee witnessed that good confession, (whereof Paule maketh mention, 1. Tim. 6. 13.) not in woordes but in deede: not that hee might thereby procure any thing priuately to himselfe, but that he might thereby obtaine pardon for all mankind.

L V K E. 4. *Then Pilate sayd.* Sith Christ should beare the punishment for our sinnes, it was meete that he shuld first be cleared by the iudges owne mouth, that then it might appeare that hee was rather condemned for others, then for his owne cause. But because that Pilate durst not dismiss him freely, because of the tumult of the people, he willingly tooke the occasiō that was offered him, that he might reserre him ouer to Herodes iudgement. And this was that Herode, whose surname was Antipas, to whome the Tetrarchie of Galile was left, when Iudea should be made a part of the prouince of Syria, Archelaus being sent againe to Vienna. And though that Luke wil a litle after shew that Herode was appeased by this present: yet his will was not so much to seeke to geite his fauour, as to haue an honest pretence to keepe himselfe out of enuy, and so to auoide the necessity of condemning of Christ.

8. *And when Herode saw Iesus, he was exceeding glad.* Hereby it appeareth howe drunke, or rather altogether mad, the wicked are made by their owne pride. For though Herode would not acknowledge Christ for the sonne of God, yet he accounted him at the least for a prophet, wherefore he was most wicked to be delighted with his reproches & ignominie. But as if he had bene injured all that time, that he had not the sight of Christe, now hee hauing him at his pleasure, triumpheth as a conquerour. We see also who the Prophets in whom the power of God doth shine, are loued of wicked and prophane men. Herode hadde longe wished to see Christ: Why did hee not also desire to heare him, that hee might

might profit by his doctrine? Namely, because that he had rather be a bare beholder of the diuine power, then godlyly and humbly to reuerence it as they ought. And this is the wisdom of the flesh, so to seeke out God in his workers, that it may not become subiecte to his power: so to desire to see his seruantes, that it may auoide to heare him speaking by them. Yea, when Herode hoped for some myracle of Christ, he had yet rather to lie guilty at his secte, then to allow him to be a teacher. Wherefore it is no meruaile if God shoulde withdraw his glory from the vngodly, who would gladly haue them to make them some sports as if he were some iester.

11. *And Herode despised him.* It could not otherwise be but that Christ shuld be despised by this proud man, who pleased himselfe in his delights, kingly honour and riches, for that he had then no other but a contemptible estate. Yet Herodes pride is not to be excused, who shutte vp the way against the grace of God: and it is not to bee doubted but that God, that hee might plague his former slouthfulnesse, purposely hardned his minde with such a sight. For he was vnworthy to behold any sparke of the heauenly glory which was in Christ: because that he had so long shut his eyes at the full light wherewith all his country had been enlightened.

And Luke declareth that Christ was not only despised of Herode alone, but of all his band of menne: that wee might know that it is rare for God to haue his right honour in princes countes. For because that almost all countries are giuen to vaine pomps, their senses are ouerwhelmed with so much vanity, that they doe either carelesly despise the spirituall grace of God, or else they do passe by them with closed eyes. But by this contempt of Christe there is a newe dignity purchased for vs, so that now we are precious to GOD and to the Angelles.

12. *They were made friends.* In this, that Christe was a token or pledge of friendship made betweene the vngodly, let vs learne how contemptible the children of God and religion it selfe are in the world. It is probable that where they were both puffed vpe with ambition, that they grew into some cōtention for the gouernement: but whatsoeuer was the beginninge of their dissention, neither of the both woulde yeeld the least iote of his right to the other in earthly affaires: yet because there was no account made of Christe, Pilate doth willingly send him ouer to Herode, and in like maner Herode sendeth him backe to Pilate. So at this day we see when Iudges doe contende & strue for theeues & other wicked men, the children of God are cōtemptuously reiecte as things of nought. And the hatred of godlinesse doth oft reconcile the vngodly together, that they which before could agree in nothing, shoulde conspire together to extinguish the name of God. And when the vngodly doe on every side deliuer the children of God to death, they doe not purchase mutuall friendship as with a great reward, but that which they thinke most vile, they doe not hardly sticke at, euen as if a man should cast a crust of bread to a dogge. But Christ by abolishing discords should conclude an other peace amongst vs: namely, that wee being firste reconciled to God might with a godly and holy consent partly helpe each others to maintaine righteousnesse, partly that wee might strue in brotherly ducies and mutuall humanitie.

Mathew 27.

Marke 15

Luke 23.

15. Nowe at the feast the gouernour was wont to deliuer vnto the people a prisoner, whom they would.
16 And they had then a notable prisoner called Barrabas.
17. When they were then gathered together Pilate said vnto them: Whether wil you that I let loose vnto you Barrabas or Iesus which is called Christ?
18. (For hee knewe well, that for enuie they had deliuered him.
19. Also, when hee was sette downe vpon the iudgment seate, his wife sent to him, saying: Haue thou nothing to doe with that iuste manne: for I haue suffered many thinges this day in a dreame by reason of him.)
20. But the chiefe priestes and the Elders had perswaded the people that they should aske Barrabas, and should destroy Iesus.
21 Then the gouernour answered & sayd vnto them: whether of the twaine will ye that I let loose vnto you? And they sayd Barabbas.
22. Pilate said vnto them What shall I doe then with Iesus, which is called Christ? They all sayd to him: Lette hym bee crucified.
23. Then sayd the gouernour: But what euill hath he done? Then they cried the more, saying: Lette hym bee crucified.

6. Now at the feast Pilate did deliuer a prisoner vnto them whom soeuer they would desire
7. Then there was one named Barrabas, which was bounde with his felowes, that had made insurrection who in the insurrection had committed murther.
8. And the people cryed aloud, & began to desire that he would do as he had euer done to the.
9. Then Pilate answered them, and said: Will ye that I let loose vnto you the king of the Iewes?
10. For he knew that the hie priest had deliuered him of enuie.
11. But the hie priestes had moued the people to desire that he would rather deliuer Barrabas vnto them.
12. And Pilate answered & said againe vnto them What will ye then that I doe with him whom ye call the king of the Iewes.
13. And they cried againe, Crucifie him.
14. Then Pilate sayd vnto them: But what euill hath he done? And they cried the more feruently: Crucifie him.

13. Then Pilate called together the hie priestes, and the rulers and the people.
14. And saide vnto them Yee haue brought this manne vnto mee as one that peruerced the people and behold I haue examined him before you, and haue founde no fault in this man, of those thinges whereof yee accuse him.
15. No, nor yet Herode: for I sent you to him & loe, nothing worthy of death is done to him.
16. I will therefore chastice him and let him loose.
17. (For of necessitie hee must haue lette one loose to them at the feast.)
18. Then all the multitude cried at once, sayinge awaye with him, and deliuer to vs Barrabas,
19. Which for a certaine insurrection made in the citie, and murther, was cast in prison.
20. Then Pilate spake againe to them, willing to let Iesus loose.
21. But they cried, sayinge crucifie, crucifie him
22. And hee sayde vnto them the thirde time. But what euill hath hee done? I finde no cause of death in him: I will therefore chastice him, and let him loose.
23. But they were instante with loud voyce, and required that hee might bee crucified and the voyces of them, and of the hie Priestes preuailed.

15. At the feast the gouernour was wont. Here is now described to vs partly the vnapp-

vnappealeable cruelty of the priests, partly also the furious obstinacy of the people. For it must needs be that they both were wonderfull madde, who were not satisfied with conspiring of the death of an innocent man except that also in despite of him they should set a thiefe at libertie. Sathan so casteth the vngodly headlong, that after they begin once to fall, they doe abhorre no wickednesse be it neuer so detestable, but as men blinded and amased they heape sinnes vpon sinnes. It is not to be doubted, but Pilate that hee might make them yelde for shame, chose this most wicked man, against whom Christe being opposed, might be set free. And the hainousnesse of the crime whereof Barrabas was guilty, shoulde haue caused the people iustly to haue hated him, that at the least by comparison, Christ might be set free. But neither the priestes nor the whole nation are afraid of any shame, but they desire that the seditious person and murderer should be giuen vnto them. In the meane while we must consider the counsell of God, whereby it came to passe, that Christ, as the worst of all men, should be adiudged to the crosse. The Iewes with a blind furie doe rage against him: but because that God had ordained him to be a sacrifice for the washing away of the sinnes of the world, he also suffered him to be made inferiour to a theefe & a murtherer. But to see the Sonne of God brought to this poynt, no man can rightly consider it without great horror, and loathing of himselfe, and detestation of his owne sinnes. But hence also there springeth no small matter of comfort: for Christ is therefore drowned in the depth of ignominie, that by his direction he might procure our ascension into the heavenly glory: therefore was hee accounted worse then the theefe, that hee might gather vs into the societie of the Angels of God. This fruit if it be rightly esteemed, shall be enough and more then enough for the abolishing of the office of the crosse. Further, in that the gouernour was wont at the peoples choyse to set some one of the prysoners loose on the feast day, it was an example foolishly and wickedly brought in, to the manifest corruption of the worship of God. For there is nothing more vnseemely, then to solemnise the holy dayes with freeing sinnes from punishment. For God hath therefore armed the magistrates with the sword, that they might seuerely reuenge those sinnes which cannot be tollerated without the common danger. Whereby it appeareth that he would not be worshipped with the violating of his lawes and punishementes. But in this order doe men profite, when they doe rashly of themselves deuise wayes to serue GOD (when as nothing should be attempted but by the prescript rule of his worde) that vnder the pretence of honour they doe oft serue him with reproches. Wherefore wee must keepe this sobrietie, not to offer any thing to God, except that hee require it. For he is so farre from being delighted with prophane giftes, that they do rather prouoke his wrath.

19. *Also, when hee was sette downe.* Though that the meditation by day might haue bene the cause of that dreame, yet without doubt Pilates wife suffered not these troubles naturally (as doeth dayly befall to vs) but by the speciall instinct of GOD. They haue commonly thought that the Deuill suborned the woman, to the ende that hee might hinder the redemption of mankind. The which is not likely, when as by his drift the Priestes and Scribes were so earnest to destroy Christe. Therefore it must rather

rather bee taken thus, that God the father diuers wayes approoued the innocency of Christ, that it might appeare that he died for the cause of others, euen for ours. And therefore his will was, that hee should be so oft cleared by Pilates mouth before he was condemned, that a lawfull satisfaction for our sins might appeare by his vnderferued condemnation. But Matthew doth especially report this, least any man shuld wonder at this so carefull an endeouour of Pilate, while he striueth in the tumult of the people, for the life of a man despised. And certainly God by the troubles which his wife had in the night, stirred vp him to defend the innocency of his Sonne: not that he would deliuer him from death, but onely that he might testifie, that hee was humbled to beare the punishment due to others which he had not deserued. But of dreames which are as visions I haue spoken other where.

20. *But the chiefe priestes.* The Euangelist noteth the chiefe authours of the mischief: not that the people (which was pricked on forward by others) shuld be excused by lightnes of credit: but that we might know that they were not of themselves bent against Christe, but while they sought to pleasure the Priestes, they as well forgot all equity and modestie as their owne saluation. And hereby we are taught how hurtfull it is to haue the vngodly in authority, who can easily turne the common people, (then whom nothing is more vnconstant) hither & thither to any offence. The purpose yet of the Euangelist must be noted, that the people so earnestly desired to haue Christe put to death, not that hee was so odious amongst them, but because that the greater part ambitiously desiring to yeeld to their Prelates, without respect of equity, set their tongue as it were on sale to the vngodly conspiracie of a few.

22. *What shall I doe then with Iesus?* Because that Pilate saw them so blind & madde, that with their great shame they doubted not to deliuer so notable an offender from death: he endeoureth by an other meane to touch them, that so hee might bring them backe to the right way: for that the death of Christe should bring shame vpon them, because that it was commonly reported of Iesu that he was a king, and the Christ: as if he shoulde haue sayde: If you haue no pittie of the manne, at the least haue regard of your owne honour: for strangers will commonly thinke that by the punishment of him all you are corrected. But the hate of their cruelty was not by this meanes appeased, but that they woulde goe forwards rather to be enemies publicly to themselves, then priuately to Christ. Therefore after Marke, that Pilate might vrge them the more hardly, he sayeth that they also called Iesus a king, declared this title to be so common, as if it had been his vsuall surname. But all shame being cast aside, they do boldly vrge the death, which drew with it the ignominie of the whole nation. Iohn doth report their answer which our three doe concale: namely, that they haue no king but Caesar. So they had rather be deprived of the hope of redemption promised them, and to be brought into perpetuall slavery, then to take the redeemer offered them from God.

L V. 16. *I will therefore chastise him, and let him loose.* If that a light offence was committed not worthy of death, the Romane gouernours were wont to beate him which hadde so offended, with rods: and this kind of punishment was called a chastisement. Therefore Pilate doeth vnrighteously, who

freeing Christe from all offence, would yet punish him as if hee were conuict of some small crime. For he doth not only testifie that he found no fault in him worthy of death, but he saith that his innocency is without exceptiō. Therefore why doth he whip him? But this is the vse of earthly men, whome the spirit of God hath not confirmed in the constant way of righteousness, although they desire to maintain equity, they are enforced to yeeld to small iniuries. And they do not only accoite this as a iust excuse for them, that they fell into a most grievous sin, but they doe challenge theselues to be prayseworthy for that their calamity, because they somewhat spared the innocent. But they do not consider that righteousness which is more precious then the life of men, is violated as well with rods as with the axe. As concerning the sonne of God, if he had beene in this maner dismissed, he had borne the reproach of the rods without the worke of our salvation: but on the crosse, euen as in a most royall chariot, he hath triumphed over his enemies and ours. But I doe wish that the world were not at this day filled with many Pilates: for we doe see the same fulfilled in the members which was begun in the head. With the same cruelty which the Iewish priests cryed out that Christ shuld be put to death, doth the Popish cleargy preserve his seruants. And many iudges, doe willingly yeelde to their rage to make theselues their butchers: but they which doe abhorre to shed blood, that they may deliuer the innocent from death, they doe whip Christ himselfe the onely righteousness of God. For what is it else, to compell the seruants of God for the redemption of life to deny the gospell, but to make the name of Christ subiect to rods? In the meane season they pretend the violence of his enemies: as if that by this colour their faithlesse fearefulness were well couered: which if it could not be excusable in Pilate, it deserueth great detestation in them. But though our three Euangelists doe omit this, yet it appeareth by Iohn, that Christe was beaten with rods, when as yet Pilate sought to preserve his life, that the wofull sight might appease the rage of the people. Yet Iohn addeth with all that it could not be appealed, vntill the authour of life was put to death.

Matth. 27.

24. When Pilate sawe that hee auailed nothing: but that more tumult was made, he took water, and washed his handes before the multitude, saying: I am innocēt of the blood of this iust man: looke you to it.

25. Then answered all the people, and sayde: his blood be on vs and on our children.

26. Then let hee Barrabas loose vnto them, & scourged Iesus,

& deliuered him to be crucified

27. Then the souldiours of the gouernour tooke Iesus into the common hall, and gathered about him the whole band.

28. And they stripped him, and

put

Marke 15.

15. So Pilate willing to content the people, loosed them Barrabas, and deliuered Iesus: when he had scourged him, that hee might be crucified.

16. Then the souldiours ledde him away into the hall, which is the common hall, and called together the whole band.

17. And clad him with purple, & platted a crown of thornes, & put it about his head.

18. And beganne to salute him, saying: Haile king of the Iewes.

19. And

Luke. 23.

24. So Pilate gave sentence, that it shoulde be as they required.

25. And hee let loose vnto them, him that for insurrection & murder was cast into prison, whome they desired, and deliuered Iesus to do with him what they would.

26. And as they led him away, they caught one Symon of Cyrene, comming out of the field, & on him they laid the crosse, to beare it after Iesus.

27. And there followed him a great multitude of people, and of women, which wo-

men

put vpon him a scarlet roabe
29. And platted a crowne of
thornes, and putte it vpon his
head, and a reed in his right
hand & bowed their knees
before him and mocked him
saying, God saue the king of
the Iewes. 30. And spat
vpon him, & tooke a reed &
smot him on the head.

31. Thus when they had mock-
ed him they tooke the roabe
from him & put on his owne
raiment on him and led him
away to crucifie him.

32. And as they came out,
they found a man of Cyrene,
named Simon: him they com-
pelled to beare his crosse.

24. When Pilate saw. Euen as the mariners after they haue tasted the great force
of the tempest. At the last yeeld and suffer themselues to be driuen into a con-
trary course. So Pilate seeing himselie vnable to appease the sturre of the people
laying by the authority of a iudge, he followeth their mad outcries. And though
he had striven long to resist them, yet necessitie doeth not excuse him: for he
should rather haue suffred any thing then to haue neglected his office. And his
sin is not made the lesse by the childish ceremony which he vsed, for how should
hee wipe away the blot of the offence with a few drops of water, which no sa-
crifices could wash away? And it may be that he had but smal regard to be clea-
red of his faults before God: but he shewed the people this token of detestation,
if it might fall out, that he might draw them to repent for their fury, as if he had
said thus: Behold you compell me to an vnrighteous murder, to the which I
am brought with feare and horror. Therefore what shall become of you, and
what great vengeance of God doth remaine for you, who are the cheife authors
of it? But what purpose so euer Pilate had, yet God would by this meanes de-
clare the innocency of his sonne, whereby it might the better appeare that our
sins are condemned in him. The cheife and onely iudge of the world is set be-
fore the tribunall seate of an earthly iudge: he is condemned to the crosse as a
wicked man: and also he is set in the midst betweene two theeues, as if he were
the captaine of them. The lothsomnes of such a spectacle might at the first sight
much trouble the senses of men, if this reason were not considered, that the pun-
ishment which was due to vs, was layd vpon Christ, that the guiltines beeing
now taken away, we should not doubt to come forth into the presence of the
heavenly iudge. Therefore the water which nothing preuiled Pilate for the
washing away of his faults, should auaille at this day to an other vse, that it may
purge our eyes from all impediments, that therby they may in the midst of dam-
nation clearly behold the rightcoufnesse of Christ.

25. His blood bee on vs. It is not to bee doubted but that the Iewes care-
lessly cursed themselues, as if their cause were good before God: but an
vnaduised zeale caried them headlong so farre, that they committing a

19. And they smot him
on the head with a reede
and spat vpon him, and
bowed the knees, and did
him reuerence.

20. And when they had
mocked him, they tooke
a purple off him, and put
his owne clothes on hym,
and led him out to cruci-
fie him.

21. And they compelled
one that passed by, called
Symon of Cyrene (which
came out of the country
and was father of Alex-
ander & Rufus) to beare
his crosse.

menne bewailed and lamented
him. 28. But Iesus turned
backe vnto them, and saide:
Daughters of Ierusalem, weepe
not for mee, but weepe for your
selues & for your children.

29. For behold, the daies will
come when men shall say: bles-
sed are the barren, & the wōbes
that neuer bare, and the pappes
which neuer gaue sucke.

30. Then shall they beginn to say
to the mountaines: Fall on vs: &
to the hills, cower vs. 31. For if
they do these things to a greene
tree, what shall be done to y^e drie

32. And there were 2 others
which were euill doers, led with
him to be slaine

sin vn pardonable, should also by a solemne curse, cut themselves from all hope of forgiveness. Hereby we do gather how carefully all vnadvised rashnes must be taken heed of in all iudgements For where men dare without regard of examination do this or that as they please, at the length from a blind headinesse, it is necessary that they should fall into madnes. And this is the iust vengeance of God, whereby he plagueth their pride, which vouchsafe not to make choise of right or wrong. The Iewes thought that by killing Christ they doe GOD good seruice: but whence commeth this wicked errour, but of their vngodly stubboines and contempt of God himselfe? Wherefore they are worthily throwen into this madnesse, that they might purchase themselves their vter destruction. But where the question is of the worship of God, and of his holy mysteries, let vs learne to open our eyes, and reuerently and soberly seeke to knowe the cause, least hypocrisie and audaciousnes should make vs to be as amased menne without wit. And as God neuer suffereth this cursed speech to come out of the mouth of the people, except their impiety had first bin desperate: so he doth after iustly reuenge the same by fearefull and vawonted meanes, and yet by an incredible myracle here serued some remnantes to himselfe, least that his couenant should be extinguished by the destruction of the whole nation. He had adopted to himselfe the seed of Abraham, that it might be a chosen nation, a priestly kingdome, a holy portion and inheritance. Now that the Iewes as it were with one voyce, doe contpire the refusall of so great grace, who would not say that the whole nation should be pulled vp by the rootes out of the kingdom of god? But god in their infidelity doth make manifest the stedfastnes of this faith: & that he might declare that he made not his couenant in vain with Abraham, he exempted them whom he had freely chosen, from the generall destruction: so his truth doth alwaies goe far beyond all lets and stoppes of the vnbelief of man, 16. *Then let he Barrabas loose vnto the.* Our three Euangelists do not set down that which IOHN recordeth, that Pilate went vppe into his iudgement seat, that hee might thence giue his sentence: for they doe onely declare that he was won by the desire and the confused tumult of the people, to deliuer Christ without cause to death. Yet both is to be noted, that his assent should bee wrestled out of him against his will, & yet that hee should become the iudge to condemne him, who he pronounceth to bee innocent. For except the sonne of God had bene pure from all sinne, by his death wee should not haue bene cleansed. Again, if he had not bene pledge for the punishment which we had deserued, we had been still entangled in the guiltinesse of our sinnes. Therefore God would haue his son condemned in solemne maner, & hee might by his grace set vs free. But the cruelty of the punishment doth no lesse auaille to the strengthening of our faith, then with the feare of Gods wrath to terrifie vs, & with the feeling of our sins to humble vs. For if we desire to profit rightly in meditating of the death of Christ it is meet to begin there, that for the greatnes of the punishment which he sustained, we should be afraide of our sins. So it shall come to passe that we shall not onely loath and be ashamed of our selues, but as men wounded with great sorrow, with that earnestnes which is meete we should seeke for helpe, & whichall we should feare as men amased. For our hearts should be harder then stones, if we should not be thoroughly wounded with the woundes of the Sonne of GOD.

If we should not hate and detest our finnes, for the washing away of the which, the Sonne of God suffered so great paine. But as the horrible vengeance of God doeth heere manifest it selfe, so on the other part wee haue most plentifull matter for our comfort sette before vs. For it is not to bee feared that our finnes should come any more before God, to bee iudged, from the whiche the Sonne of God hath freed vs with so pretious a reward. For he did not onely die a common maner of death, that he might purchase life for vs, but together with the crosse, he tooke our curse vpon him selfe, least any vncleannesse should any more remaine in vs.

27. Then the souldiours of the gouernour, tooke Iesus into the common hall, and gathered about him the whole bande. This heaping vpe of reproofes is not sette downe in vaine. That God shoulde set forth his onely begotten sonne to beare all kinde of reproches, wee knowe that it was not any matter of sport or game. Therefore first it is meete to consider what we haue deserued, then the recompence which Christ offered, shoulde stirre vs vpe to hope well. Our filthinesse deserueth that God should abhorre it, and that all the Angels should spit vpon vs. But Christ, that he might bring vs into the presence of his father, pure, and without spotte, would him selfe bee spitte vpon and defiled with all reproches. Wherefore that ill fauoured kinde of dealing which hee once suffered vpon the earth, doth now purchase vs fauour in heauen, and also restoreth the image of God, which was not onely defiled, but almost blotted out with the pollutions of sinne. Heere also doeth the inestimable mercy of God clearly shew it selfe, that for our cause he would thus farre cast downe his onely begotten Sonne. By this example Christ prooued his marueilous loue towards vs, in that he would refuse no kinde of ignominie for our saluation. But these things neede rather secret meditation, then to bee adorned forth with wordes. In the meane while wee are taught not to measure the kingdome of God by fleshly senses, but by the iudgement of faith and of the spirit. For so long as our mindes shall be settled in the worlde, it shall not onely seeme contemptible to vs, but also full of shamefull reproches: but as soone as they shall be lift vp into heauen by faith, they shall not onely beholde the spirituall maiestie of Christ, the whiche shall blotte out all the shame of the crosse, but the spittings, whippings, buffetings and other reproches shall lead them to beholde his glory, as Paule teacheth the Phil. 2. 10. 8. that there was giuen vnto him a name and great power, that before him euery knee should bow, because that he willingly humbled himselfe to the death of the crosse. Wherefore if the worlde doeth also at this day scorne at Christe, let vs learne by the height of faith to overcome these offences: neither let vs regarde what the vngodly shall wickedly ascribe vnto Christ, but with what ornamentes the heauenly father shall clothe him, with what scepter and with what crowne he shall adorne him, that hee may bee placed not onely farre about men, but also farre aboue all the Angelles. There is no great account to be made of this matter, where Marke putteth purple in steade of scarlet. It is not probable that Christe was apparelled with any costly garment. Whereby we doe gather that it was not purple, but such as was somewhat like it: euen as the Painter in his pictures doeth imitate the truth.

32. They found a man of Cyrene. By this circumstance there is set forth the

extreme cruelty as well of the Iewish nation as of the soldiers. It is not to be doubted, but that the euill doers were wont to beare their owne crosses, euen to the place of execution: but when as none but strôg theeues were wont to be crucified, they were able to beare such a burden: the estate of Christ was farre otherwise, that the very weaknes of the body might plainly shew that he was a lambe to be sacrificed. Also it may be, that he being maimed with whips, and hardly oppressed with many iniuries, fell downe vnder the burden of the crosse. The Euangelistes doe report that a husbandman, and one of no account, was constrained by the soldiers to beare the crosse: beecaue that maner of punishment was so detestable, that they thought they all shoulde bee defiled if they should but onely touch it. But he, who of the basest sort of the people was enforced to so vile and infamous an office, doth God nobilitate by his preachers: for it is not in vaine that the Euangelists doe not onely set downe his name, but also his country and children. Neither is it to be doubted but that God would by this beginning admonish vs, when wee are of our selues of no account nor estimation, we shall get dignity and fame by the crosse of his sonne.

L. V. 27. And there followed him. Though that all the people had openly condemned Christ with one voyce, yet we see that some forgate not his doctrine and his myracles: so in that miserable dissipation God reserued some smal remnants vnto himselfe. And though the faith of these women was weake, yet it is to be supposed that the seede of piety was hidden in them, whiche afterwarde in time conuenient sprang forth. In the meane while their weeping auailed to the condemnation of the wicked and vnspeakable cruelty of those men, which with the Scribes and Priestes had conspired to putte Christe to death. But Luke had an other purpose: namely, that we might knowe, while the people in their wickednes doe confusedly triumph, as if they hadde shaken off the bridle, that God is not as an idle beholdeer of that which is done, but he sitteth in heauen as a reuenger, who will presently take vengeance of their vniust cruelty: neither is his vengeance therefore to be despised, because it is deferred vnto a time conuenient, but before it appeareth, it must be feared.

28. Weepe not. Some thought that the women were reprovèd, because that foolishly and of an vnadvised affection they powred forth their teares in vaine. But Christ doeth not simply reprove the, as if their weeping were ill & without reason: but hee forewarneth them, that they haue farre greater cause to weepe for the horrible iudgement of God, whiche hangeth over them: as if he should haue sayd that his death was not the end, but the beginning of sorrowes to Hierusalem and to all that nation: and thus he declareth that he is not so cast out to the pleasure of the vngodly but that God hath a care of him. For by the punishment whiche afterward followed, it doth plainly appeare that the life of Christ was deare to God the father, euen then when all men thought that hee was vtterly forsaken & cast off. And these words do declare how strôg & couragious Christ was, for he could not haue spokè this, but that he wēt constantly & without feare to death: but it especially tēdeth to this, that God yet regarded him euen in that deformed and base estate: but the wicked which now doe proudly triumph as conquerours, shall not so long enioy their mad ioy, for shortly after there shall come a wonderfull change. This doctrine is also profitable for vs at this

day

day, while we acknowledge that Christ was no lesse beloued to the father, because he was without his helpe for a time. but he set so much by our saluation that he spared not his onely begotten sonne. And by this he hath giuen a notable example, when as he vterly ouerthrew the holy citie, and where he hadde onely made choise of a sanctuary for himselfe, and destroyed it together with the inhabitants of the same. Here of let vs learne to take occasion to meditate of the death of Christ. For when as God so seuerely reuenged the same, he would neuer haue suffered his son to haue suffred it, but to the end he might be a sacrifice for the sinnes of the world.

19. *For behold the dayes will come.* Hee denounceth that there is at hande no common plague, but so terrible as hath not before been heard of, in the which vengeance of god should openly be seene, as if he should haue sayd, that that nation should not bee consumed by one onely kinde of destruction, but that it should be ouerthrowne by a manifolde heape of great euils, so that it should bee much better to bee ouerwhelmed with the ruines of the mountaines, or to bee swallowed vp in an earthquake, then to waist away amongst the seuerer torments of a long destruction. And these threatens sell not away in vaine: but the cruelty it selfe which sel out far exceeded this lightning of words, as it appeareth by Iosephus. Further, where these were speaches of extreeme desperation, to wish to be conered with the mountaines and to curse the fruite of the wombe, Christ doth by these wordes teach that the Iewes shall feelee at the length, that they doe not make warre with a mortall man, but with God. So the enemies of God doe receiue a iust reward of their sacrilegious fury, so that they shoulde in vaine desire to oppose the earth as a buckler against the vengeance of GOD, who before durst be so bold as to strike at heauen it selfe.

31. *If they doe these things: to a greene tree.* Christ by this sentence doth declare that neither his death shall be vnreuedged, neither that the Iewes whose wickednesse was full ripe, yea halfe rotten should stand long, and by a common similitude he proueth that it cannot be, but that the fire of the wrath of GOD should presently deuoure and burne them vp. Wee know that the vse is first to cast dry wood into the fire, if the moist and the greene be burnt, much lesse shall the dry be spared at the length. Further, the word *They doe*, may be expounded indefinitely in this sence. If the greene wood bee cast into the fire before the time, what thinke you shall become of the dry and of the old? Except that any man had rather to compare men with God: as if Christ should haue sayde, the wicked which are like vnto dry woode, when they haue vniustly destroyed the righteous, haue their turnes prepared for them by God: for howe shoulde they which were before appointed to destruction, escape the hand of the heauely iudge who for a time giueth them so great liberty against the good and innocent? But which of the two wayes soeuer it be taken, the sum is, that the lamentation of the women was preposterous, except that withall they did waite for, & feare the horrible iudgement of God, which hangeth ouer the vngodly. And as oft as the bitternes of the crosse is troublesome to vs beyond measure, it may bee mitigated by this comfort, that God who now suffereth his children to bee afflicted vniustly, will not at the length suffer that the wicked shall goe away vnpunished.

And if this hope shoulde not vpholde vs, wee should of necessitie fall downe vnder the afflictions. For though it is naturall and more vsuall to make a fire of drie woode then of moist, yet God followeth an other order: for while he granteth the reprobate to be at quiet rest, he exerciseth his with diuers troubles: and therefore their estate is the more miserable, if it should be esteemed of, as it doth presently appeare. But this is a ready remedy, if they will patiently waite for the whole course of Gods iudgement. For so it shall comfort them to see the wicked gayne nothing by their small delay: for where GOD shall humble his faithfull ones with his fatherly rods, he will rise with a drawne sword against the, whose sinnes he seemeth for a time not to obserue.

Math. 27.

Mark. 15.

Luke. 23.

33. And when they came to the place called Golgotha, (that is to say the place of dead mens sculles.)

34. They gaue him wine mingled with gall, and when he had tasted thereof, he would not drinke.

35. And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, and did cast lottes, that it might be fulfilled, which was spoken by the Prophet: They deuided my garments amonge them, and vpon my vesture did cast lottes.

36. And they sat and watched him there.

37. They sette vp also ouer his head his cause wrytten, THIS IS IESVS, THE KINGE OF THE IEWES.

38. And there were two theues crucified with him one on the right hand & an other on the left

22. And they brought him to a place named Golgotha which is by interpretation the place of dead mens sculles.

23. And they gaue him to drink wine mingled with Myrrhe: but he receiued it not.

24. And when they had crucified him, they parted his garments, casting lottes for them what euery man should haue.

25. And it was the third hour, when they crucified him.

26. And the title of his cause was wrytten aboue, THE KINGE OF THE IEWES.

27. They crucified also with him two theeues, the one of the right hand the other of his left.

28. Thus the scripture was fulfilled which saith: And hee was counted amonge the wicked.

33. And when they were come to the place whiche is called Caluarie, there they crucified him, and the euill doers: one at the right hand and the other at the left.

34. Then said Iesus: Father forgive them for they know not what they doe. And they parted his raiments and cast lottes.

A little after.

38. And a superscription was also wrytten ouer him in Greeke letters, and in Latin, and in Hebrewe:

THIS IS THE KING OF THE IEWES.

33. And they came to the place. Iesus was led to that place, where as the euill doers were wont to be put to death, that thereby his death might bee made the more reprochfull. And though that was done according to the custome, yet it is meete more deeply to consider the purpose of God. For his will was that his sonne should be cast out of the Citie, as one vnwoorthy of the company of men, that he might receiue vs into his heauenly kingdome with the Angels. Therefore the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebr. 13. 12. applieth this to the olde figure of the law. For as God commanded that the bodies of the beasts should be burnt without the hoast, whose blood was brought into the sanctuary for a sacrifice.

So.

so he sayth, that Christ went out of the gate of the city, that by taking vppon the curse which pressed vs, hee might be as one cast away, and by this meanes hee might wash away our sinnes. And the more ignominie and reproach hee bare before the world, the more acceptable & notable a spectacle hee shewed in his death both to God & Angels. For the filthines of the place was no hinderance, but that he might there erect a glorious ensigne of his victory: neither the stinck of the carcases which lay there, could stop the sweet smell of his sacrifice from saouring throughout the whole worlde, and piercing vp euen into heauen.

34. *They gaue him vineger.* Though the Euangelistes doe not so curiously set downe all particulars in their order, so as the very moments of the times might certainly be noted: yet I doe by probable reason coniecture, that before the Lord should be list vp vpon the crosse, according to the custome, there was giuen vnto him out of a cup wine mixed with mirrhe, or what mixture soeuer it was, which was made, as it appeareth of gall also and vineger. It is throughly agreed vpon almost amongst all the interpreters, that this was not that drinke, whereof Iohn maketh mention, and whereof I shall speake a little after. This I doe onely adde, that I do thinke that there was a cup offered to the Lord, when he should be crucified: and after that the crosse was list vp o high, then it was giuen vnto him in a sponge. But when hee should beginne to aske for drinke, I am not so curious to search, yet if we doe compare all things together, it seemeth by reason that after he hadde refused that bitter confession, it was againe thrust vpon him in mockery. For afterward Matthew addeth, that the souldiours giuing him drinke, vpbraided him, because that he could not deliuer himselfe from death. Whereby wee doe gather that this medicine being offered him, they scorned at the weakenesse of Christe, because that he had complained that he was forsaken of God. As concerning the hy storie sette downe by Iohn, it is sufficient to note this one thing, that Christe for the cooling of his thirst asked, that some common drinke might be giuen him, & there was thrust vpon him vineger mixed with mirrhe and gall to hasten his death. But he bore those torments patiently, so that for wearinesse of the sorrow, he sought not to haue his death hastened. For this also was a portion of his sacrifice and obedience, to beare the delay of the paine euen to the vtmost. Further, they are deceiued in my iudgement, which doe reckon the vineger amongst the other tormentes inflicted vpon the Sonne of God. Their coniecture is more probable to mee, which doe thinke that this kinde of drink was good for to void bloud, and therefore it was wont to be giuen to euill doers, that their death might be the more speedy: therefore Marke calleth it wine mixed with mirrhe. But Christ (as I touched euen now) not so much for the offence of the bitterness refuseth the wine or vineger, as that he might shew himselfe quietly to goe forward to death, according to the commaundement of the father, and that the impaciency of the sorrow driue him not headlong. Neither is that any hinderance, which Iohn saith, that the scripture was fulfilled, Psalme. 69. 22. *In my thirst they gaue me vineger to drinke.* For they both doe very well agree: that it was giuen then as a remedie to end the tormentes of slow death: and yet that Christ was hardly afflicted by all meanes: so that the very easing of it also might bee a portion or encrease of the sorrow.

35. *They parted his garments*. It is certaine that the souldiours did this also of custome, that they parted amongst them the spoyles of a man condemned. It may bee that this one thing was extraordinary, that they cast lots for his coate without leame. But though nothing befell to Christe in this matter, but that which all condemned men did suffer, yet this hyllorie is woorthy to bee much marked. For the Euangelistes doe sette before vs the sonne of God naked without his garments, that we might know that great riches are gotten for vs by this nakednes, which shall adorne vs before God. Therefore God woulde that his Sonne should be stripped naked, that we being cloathed with his righteousness, and with plenty of all good things without feare might appeare with the Angelles, whome before a vile filthines in a torne habite kept from entrance into heauen. Christ himselfe suffered his garments to be taken from him, as a pray, that he might enrich vs with the riches of his victory. Further, where Matthew sayeth, that so the prophesie of Dauid was fulfilled, Psal. 22. 19. *They deuided my garments amongst them, &c.* must so bee vnderstood, as that was performed literally (as they say) and indeede in Christ, which Dauid metaphorically & vnder a figure complayneth of, as done to him. For Dauid by the word garments meaneth his goodes and his honours: as if he should haue sayde, that while hee liued and had his sight, hee was made a pray to his enemies, who ran into his house, and were so far from sparing those goods which were left, that they also spoiled his wife. This cruelty hee amplifieth by a metaphor, writing that his garments were deuided by lot. And wher he was a shadow & an image of christ, that which Christ should suffer he foretolde by the spirit of prophesie. Wherefore in his person this also is notable, that the souldiours spoiled his apparrell: for by this spoiling we do know those signes & notes, wherewith he was sometime adorned. And also the offence is taken away, which otherwise might in the wisdom of the flesh haue bene conceiued of his nakednes: for he suffered nothing which did not truely and properly belong to the person of the Redeemer, as the holy Ghost before declared.

MAR. 25. *And it was the third houre.* This seemeth not to agree with the testimony of Iohn: for he saith, that Christ was condemned about the sixth houre. But if we consider that which is manifest by other places, the day was deuided into foure parts, and that euery of the partes were called by the name of the first houre of the beginning of the same, it will not be hard to bee answered. The whole meane time from the rising of the Sunne euen to the second parte, they did call the first houre. The second parte vnto the midst of the day, was with them the third houre. The sixth houre beginning at the mid day, continued to three or foure of the clocke in the after noone. Therefore when the Iewes saw that Pilate deferred the time, & that now the mid day was at hand, Iohn saith, that they cryed out the more earnestly, least the wholly day should escape away. But that letteth not but that the lord was crucified about the end of the third houre. For it is euident enough after his tumultuous condemnation, that hee was suddenly carried away, the Iewes had so earnest a desire to put him to death. Therefore Marke meaneth not the beginning of the third houre, but the end. And this is the more likely to be true, that Christe hunge not about three houres vpon the crosse.

L. V. 34. Then Iesus said. By this speech Christ proued himselfe to be that meeke and gentle Lambe, which should be led to bee slaine, as Isaiah the Prophet had witnessed, 53, 7. For he doth not onely leaue off reuenge, but he commendeth to God the father the saluation of them, of whom he is most cruelly vexed. This had beene a great thing, to thinke nothing of reuengement: as Peter when by his example exhorteth vs to patience, saith, that he gaue not rebuke for rebuke, neither reuenged his own iniuries, but was content with this alone, that hee had God for a reuenger, 1. Pet. 2. 23. But this was a farre greater and more excellent vertue, to pray to God that hee would forgieue his enemies, If any man doth thinke that this dooth not sufficiently agree with that saying of Peter, which I cited euen nowe, there is an answer ready for it. For where Christ was led by a merciful affection, to entreat God to pardon his persecutors: it is no let, but that hee might commit himselfe to the iust iudgement of God. which hee knewe to be appoynted for the reprobate and the obstinate. When Christ therefore saw that partly the Iewish people, partly the soldours were madde against him in a blinde heate, though their ignoraunce was not to be excused, yet he taketh pittie vpon them, so that he himselfe prayeth for them. Yet sith hee knew that God would be a reuenger, he leaueth the iudgement to him against the reprobate. And in this maner shoulde the faithfull temper their affections in bearing of afflictions, that they shoulde desire that their persecutors might bee saued: and yet that they should not doubt but that their life is vnder the defence of God: and resting vpon this comfort, that at the length the wicked shall not goe forward in their lust vnpunished, they shall not faint vnder the burden of the crosse.

Luke dooth now sette before vs an example of this moderation in our guide and maister: for when as hee could haue cursed his persecutors to destruction, hee dooth not onely abstaine from cursing: but also he prayeth for their good. And it is to be noted, if at any time the whole world shoulde rise vp against vs, and endeavour by violence to ouerwhelme vs all, this is the best remedy to ouercome this temptation, if at any time we doe thinke of their blindnes, which doe oppose themselues against God in vs. For so it shall come to passe, that the conspiracy of many against vs left alone and forsaken, shall not trouble vs aboue measure. As againe daily vse doth shew how strong an engine it is to shake the weake with, when they see themselues assaulted of a great multitude. Therefore if wee will learne to arise vp to God, it shall be an easie matter for vs, as it were from an high to despise the ignoraunce of the vnfaithfull: for howsoeuer they doe excell in forces and great bandes, yet they knowe not what they doe.

But it is likely that Christe prayed not generally for menne, but onely for the simple people, who were carried by an vnadvised zeale, & not by deliberate wickednes. For as there was no hope left of the Scribes and priests, so he should haue prayed for them in vaine. And without doubt, beecause the heavenly Father heard his prayer, heereof it came to passe that many of the people, which had shed blood, did afterwarde belecue.

37. *They set vpon his head.* That whiche Matthewe and Marke doe touch briefly, Luke doth sette forth more expressely, that the title was written in three languages. Also Iohn doth declare it more at large. Wherefore let the readers see there, that which here I doe omitte for breuitie sake. I will onely say, that this was not done without the prouidence of God, that the death of Christ shoulde be celebrated in three languages: for though Pylate had no other purpose, then reproachfully to touch the Iewish nation, yet God had a further regard. For in this, as it were by prophesie he declared that the death of his sonne shoulde be renowned euery where, that all people in all places might know the king promised to the Iewes. But this was no lawfull preaching of the Gospel: for Pilat, whome God appoynted to giue testimony to his sonne was a man vnworthy: but that which was to be done by the true ministers was shadowed out in Pilat. To be short, he may be accounted such a preacher of Christ, as Caiaphas was a Prophet.

38. *Then they crucified.* This is added to the heape of extreame shame, that Christe is hanged in the middest betweene two theeues, for they gaue him the chiefe Place, no otherwise then to the Prince of theeues. If he had bene crucified alone, his cause might seeme to haue bene separate from other euill doers. but now he is not onely thrust in amongst them, but he is lifted vp on high, as if he were the most detestable of all. Wherefore Marke to this purpose applyeth the prophesie of Iesaiah, 53. 12. Hee is accounted with the wicked. For in this the Prophet doth especially make mention of Christ, not that he should by a royall pompe deliuer his from death, but because that he should beare the punishment due to their sinnes. Therefore that hee might deliuer vs from guiltines, this maner of sacrifice was necessary, that hee might submit himselfe into our place. And here is to be seene how horrible the weight of the wrath of god is against sinnes, for the appeasing whereof it behoued Christe the eternall righteousnesse to be throwne into the order of theeues. Here is also set forth the incomparable loue of Christ, who that he might gather vs to the company of the holy angels, did abide to be accounted one of the euill doers.

Matt. 27.

Mark. 15.

Luke. 23.

39. *And they that passed by reuiled him wagging their beades,*

40. *And saying Thou shalt destroye the temple & builde it in three daies, saue thy selfe if thou be the son of God come down from thy crosse*

41. *Likewise also the hie Priests mockinge hi with the Scribes & Elders, and Pharises said,*

29. *And they that went by rayled on him, wagging their heads & saying, Hey, thou that destroyest the temple, and builde it in three daies*
30 *Saue the selfe, and come downe from the crosse.*

31. *Likewise also euen the hie priests mockinge said among themselues with the Scribes, He saued other men, himselfe*

35. *And the people stood & beheld: and the rulers mocked him with them sayinge hee saued others let him saue himselfe if he be the Christ, the chosen of God.*

36. *The soldiours also mocked him & offered him vineger,*

37. *And said, if thou be the king of the Iewes, saue thy selfe.*

A little after.

39. *And one of the euill doers which were hanged, rayled on him sayinge, if thou be the Christe, saue thy selfe and vs.*

42. Hee

bee

40. But

42. He saved others, but he cannot save himself: if hee bee the kinge of Israel let him now come downe from the crosse, and wee will beleene him.
43. He trusteth in God let him deliuer him now if hee will haue him: for hee sayd, I am the sonne of God.

hee cannot saue.
32. Let Christe the kinge of Israel now come downe from the crosse, that we may see and beleene. They also that were crucified with him reuiled him

40. But the other answered, and rebuked him, saying fearest thou not God seeing thou art in the same condemnation.

41. Wee are in deede here righteously for wee receiue things worthy of that wee haue done: but this man hath done nothing amisse.

42. And hee saide vnto Iesus, Lorde remember me, when thou comdest into thy kingdome.

43. Then Iesus said vnto him, verely I say vnto thee, to day thou shalt be with mee in paradise.

39. And they that passed by. These circumstances doe containe great matter, for heere is set before our eyes the humbling of the Sonne of God into the lowest degree, whereby it may the better appeare how much our saluation cost him: and withall considering that by right all those paines were due to vs, which hee bore, we should bee more and more stirred vp to repentance. For in this spectacle God doth openly reueale to vs, how miserable our estate should haue beene, if wee had not had a redeemer. But whatsoeuer thinges Christ bore vpon him, must bee applyed to the comforting of vs. And certainly this contention was harder then all the torments, that all men vexed him with checkes and tauntes, as if he were reiected and forsaken of God. And therefore Dauid, Psal. 22. 7. 8. 9. bearing the person of Christ, in all his troubles he doth especially bewaile this. And truly there is nothing that doth more sharply wound the mindes of the godly, then that the wicked for the weakning of their faith do vpbraide them as left destitute of the helpe and grace of God. This is that sharpe persecution, wherewith Paul, Gal. 4. 29. sayth, that Isaac was vexed by Ismael not that he ragd against him with the sword and force of armes: but beecause that he deriding the grace of God, attempted to ouerthrow his faith. Dauid also first, and then Christ, suffred these temptations, least they should terrifie vs at this day by their noueltie. For the wicked shall neuer be wanting, who will triumph ouer our miseries. And this is a common deuise of Sathan (so ofte as God doth not comfort vs according to our desire, but hideth his helpe a litle) to obiect, that our hope is in vaine, as if that his promise were of no effect.

40. Thou that destroyest the Temple. They doe charge Christes doctrine with vanitie, because that now when it is necessary, he doth not shewe in deede that power, which he challenged to himselfe. But if that a desire to speake euill, had not deprived them both of wit and iudgement, shortly after they might haue easily seene the truth of that saying. Christ had sayd, destroy you this Temple, & in three dayes I will raise it vp. Now they doe make a proud triumph at the beginnings of the ruine, and they looke not for the end of the third day. Such insolency do the wicked vse against al the children of god, while vnder pretence of the Crosse, they doe endeavour to cut them off from the hope of the life to come.

come. Where is (say they) that immortall glory which credulous men doe foolishly boast of: when as the most of them doe lye without glory and despised others doe liue poorly, others doe hardly drawe their breath vnder continuall troubles, others are tossed with flyings and banishments: others doe pine away in prisons, others are burnt and brought to ashes: So the present corruption of the outward man doth blinde the, & they do imagine the hope of the renewing of the life to come to be vaine and ridiculous. But we must waite for the time appointed of the promised building, neither must wee beare it greiuously, if we bee now crucified with Christ, that we may be afterwards partakers of his resurrection.

If thou be the Sonne of God. The vngodly doe require of Christ such a testimonie of his power, that by prouing himselfe to be the sonne of God, hee should cease to be the sonne of God. Vpon this condition he became man, and came into the world, that by the sacrifice of his death he might reconcile men to God the father. Therefore that he might be shewed to be the sonne of God, it was necessary for him to hang vpon the crosse. Now these reprobates doe deny the redeemer to bee in the place of the Son of God, except he descending from the crosse should renounce the commandement of the father, & reiecting the washing away of sins, should cast off the office layd vpon by God. But let vs hereby learne to strengthen our faith: because that the sonne of God for the worke of our saluation would remain fastened to the crosse, vntill that partly with most cruel torments of the flesh, partly with horrible anguishes of the spirit he should suffer death it selfe. And least it should befall to vs, to tempt God in like maner as wee see these men did, let vs suffer God so oft as it shall so seeme good vnto him, to hide his power, that againe to his owne pleasure hee may execute the same conveniently. There appeareth the same wickednes in the other objection, which presently followeth. *If he bee the king of Israell, let him nowe come downe from the crosse, and we will beleue him.* For it was not meete for them to accept of any other king, but such a one as was described by the Prophets. But Esay expressly 53. and Zachariah, 9. 9. doe describe Christ to be without forme, afflicted condemned and accursed, broken, poore and contemned, before that he should enter into his royall throne. Therefore the Iewes doe preposterously desire one vnlike to him, whom they acknowledge for a king: for so they do declare, that they haue no regard of that king, whom God had promised to giue them. But on the contrary side (that our faith may wholly be reposed in Christ) let vs seeke for helpe in his crosse. For hee cannot otherwise bee accounted for the lawfull king of Israel, but by performing all the partes of a Redeemer. And hereby wee do gather how dangerous a thing it is by wandering after our own deuises to depart from the word of God. For because that the Iewes imagined to haue such a king as their wit had deuised the, they refused Christe crucified, because they thought it an absurd thing to beleue in him, but to vs it is the best & chiefe reason of our beleefe, because that for our cause he willingly submitted himselfe to the ignominie of the crosse. 42. *He saued others.* This vnthankfulnes is not to be excused, that they being offended with the present abasing of Christe, doe make no account of all those myracles, which he before had wrought in their sight. They do confesse that he had saued others: by what power? or by what meanes?

Why

Why doe they not at the least in this behalfe reuerence the manifest woorke of God? But because they doe maliciously choake, yea, as much as lieth in them, they doe endeavour to quench the light of God, which shone in the myracles, they are vnworthy to iudge aright of the infirmitie of the crosse. Because Christ doth not presently deliuer himselfe from death, they doe vpbraid him of weaknes. And this is too vsuall amongst al the wicked, to measure the power of God by that which is presently seene, that whatsoeuer he doeth not, they thinke hee cannot doe: and therefore they doe charge him of weakenes, to oft as he doth not obey their peruerse desire. But let vs note, that Christ when he easily could, did not presently deliuer himselfe from death, but because he would not. And why doth he for a time neglect his owne safegarde, but because he had more regarde of the saluation of vs all? Why would he not deliuer himselfe, but that he might deliuer vs all? Therefore we see that those things, which doe make well to the edification of our fayth, the Iewes through their owne malice drew to the maintenance of their vnbeleife. 43. *Hetruisseth in God.* Sathan hath, as I said before, this most sharpe dart of temptation, while he saigneth that God forgetteth vs, because that hee doeth not helpe vs speedily and in the very poynt of time. For when God waiteth vpon the saluation of his children, and doth not onely helpe them in time conuenient, but also preuenteth their necessitie (as the scripture doth euery where declare) he seemeth not to loue them, whom he helpeth not: And so by this logicke hee leadeth vs into despaire, that wee doe trust in the loue of God in vaine, where his helpe doth not appeare openly. And as he prompteth our mindes with this kind of fallacie, so he suborneth his ministers, which shall argue that God hath no regard of our safegarde, but reiecteth vs, because he deferreth his helpe. Therefore is behooueth vs to refuse this argument as faulty. that they are not beloued of God, whom he seemeth to forsake for a time. Nay, there were nothing more absurd, then to tie his loue to euery point of time. God promisseth that he will be our deliuerer: but if sometime he should seeme to winke in our aduersities, the delay must bee borne with patience. Wherefore it is contrary to the nature of fayth, for them to vrge that aduerbe *now*, whom God by the crosse and troubles frameth to patience, and stirreth vp to prayers, and to call vpon his name: when as these are rather testimonies of his fatherly loue, as the Apostle in the Epistle to the Hebrewes, 12.6. declarcth. And this was especially to be scene in Christ, though he was the beloued sonne, yet was he not deliuered from death, vntill he had borne the punishment due to vs, for by that price were we redeemed to saluation.

Wherefore the priestes againe do deale peruersly, when they do conclude that he is not the Sonne: because that he supplyeth that rounge appointed him of his father.

44. *That same also the theecues cast in his teeth.* Matthew & Marke by Synecdoche do attribute that to the theecues, which was proper only to one of them, as it appeareth by Luke. Neither may this speech seeme strange: for the two Euangelists had no other purpose then to declare that Christ was rayled vpon on euery side, so that euen the theecues spared him not nowe when hee was halfe dead. Euen as Dauid in the Psalmes, 22. 7. 8. beewayling his calamities, doth thereof take occasion to amplifie the grieuousnes of them, for that he was made

the shame of all men, and the contempt of the people. And though they doe omitte a history woorthy to bee remembred, which Luke reporteth of the other theefe: yet there is no absurdity in that, which they do say, that Christ was derided of all, yea euen of the very theeues. For it is not spoken of euery particular person but of that kind of men. Now therefore let vs come to Luke.

L V. 39. *And one of the euil doers.* But this reproach, which the Sonne of God suffered of the theefe, great honour is gotten for vs amongst the Angelles, that they should acknowledge vs for their brethren. But in the meane while heere is sette before vs an example of furious obstinacy in this wretched man, seeing that he ceaseth not to vomit out blasphemyes with cruelty in the midst of his afflictions. So desperate men, which cannot escape the tormentes, doe vse by frowardnes to seeke reuenge. And though he vpbraideh Christ, that he could neither saue himselfe nor others, yet this obiection striketh at God himselfe. As the wicked, oft as they obtaine not what they desire, they would willingly pull God out of heauen. It was meete that they being tamed with afflictions, shuld become gentle: but hereby it appeareth, how the hardnes of the euil heart was hardned, which could bee bowed by no punishments.

40. *But the other answered.* There is in this miserable man set before vs a rare example of the vn hoped for and incredible grace of God, partly because that sodenly at his death he is chaunged into a new man, and is drawne backe euen from the very helles to heauen: Then because that he obtained in a moment forgiveness of all his sinnes, wherein he had bene drowned all his life, and so hee is receiued into heauen before the Apostles and the first frutes of the newe Church. Firste therefore in the conuersion of this manne, there doeth clearly appeare a notable token of the grace of God. For it came not of the proper instinct of the flesh, that he cast off the great cruelty and proud cōtempt of god, that he should presently repent, but he is brought vnder the hand of God: as all the scripture teacheth that repentance is his worke. And this grace is so much the more excellent, because that it befell beyond all mens hope. For who would euer haue thought that the theefe at his last breath should not only become a godly worshipper of God, but a singular maister of fayth and piety to the whole worlde: so that wee also from his mouth may learne a rule of true and lawfull confession? And this hee vttered as the firste suites of his repentance, that with a sharpe reprehension he reprooued the vngodly frowardnesse of his owne fellowe: then he addeth this as the second, humbling himselfe wth a free confession of his owne sinnes, and attributing to Christe the prayse due to his righteousnes. Afterwardes hee testifieth a wonderfull fayth, casting himselfe wholly and his saluation into the defence of Christ, whom yee saw hanging vpon the crosse and ready to die.

Fearst thou not God? Though interpreters doe wrest these woordes diuersly, yet the simple meaning of them seemeth to mee to bee thus, what meaneth this, that this condemnation compelleth thee not to feare GOD? For the theefe doeth thereof take occasion to exaggerate the hardnesse of his fellowe, because that hee being brought to extreame necessitie, dooth not so beginne to feare GOD. But that all ambiguity may bee taken away, the readers are to bee admonished, that this arrogant and wicked rayler, who

who thought to haue passed with his scoffing without punishment, is called back to the iudgement seate of God : for though he had been all his life without feeling, it behooued him then to tremble, when hee felt the hand of God armed against him, and shortly after hee was to yeele a reckoning of all his offences. Therefore it was a signe of a desperate & a deuillish obstinacy, when God held him tyed vp to the last iudgement, not then to come to a right mind: for if there hadde beene any droppe of pitty in the heart of the man, he should at the least bee enforced to gather himselfe to the feare of God . Nowe wee vnderstand the meaning of the woordes , that they are desperate and without all feare of God, which are not amended by punishments. *En to auto crimati*, I doe interpret not for the same, but to be in the present execution of condemnation : as if the theefe had sayde : Sith thou art nowe as it were in the midst of death, it behoued thee now to be wakened, that thou mightest acknowledge god thy iudg. Further, wee doe hercof gather a profitable doctrine, that they doe wholly sette themselves against God, who are not taught humility by corrections: for shame doth of necessitie driue them to holde their peace, whosocuer are endued with any feare of God.

41. *Wee are indeed here righteously.* Because the reproofe gathered of the condemnation, might seeme to light vpon Christ, the theefe doth here make a distinction betweene Christ and the cause of him and his fellowe, for the punishment which was common, was, as he confesseth, iustly layd vpon him and his fellow, but not vpon CHRIST, who was not put to death for any fault of his owne, but for the cruelty of the enemies. But that must be remembered which I sayde euen now, that the theefe made a notable shew of repentance, such as God requirith of every one of vs, in that hee confesseth that hee receiueth a rewarde worthy of that which he hath done. And this especially must be noted, that the cruelty of the punishment was no hinderance, but that he submitted himselfe patiently to the fierce torments . Wherefore, if wee doe truly repent for sinnes, lette vs learne to confesse them willingly and without dissimulation when neede shall bee, and not to flee that ignominie which we haue deserued. For this is the only meanes whereby wee may bury our sinnes before God and Angelles, if wee striue not to couer them before men with vaine colours. Further, whereas amongst diuers cloakes which hypocrisie vseth, this is most common, that every manne draweth others in with him, that by their example hee might excuse himselfe : the theefe on the contrary side doeth no lesse carefully defend the innocency of Christ, then simply and freely condemne himselfe and his fellow.

42. *Lord remember me.* I doe not know whether there euer was from the beginning of the world an example of faith more rare & worthy to be remembered: so much the more is the grace of the holy Ghost worthy to be had in admiration, which herein shewed it selfe so euidently. The theefe, who not onely had neuer been a scholler in Christs schoole, but by thrusting himselfe into bloody murders, hadde endeouored to quench all sense of righteousness, doeth of a sodaine pierce deeper, then all the Apostles, and the rest of the disciples, in teaching of whome the Lorde himselfe had bestowed so much labour: and not that onely, but Christe beeing vpon the tree of execution, hee worshipped

peth as a king: he celebrateth his hingdom in that horrible and more then deformed balenesse: he calleth him, who is about to die, the author of life. Truly, if he hadde beene instructed in the true faith, had hearde many thinges before of the office of Christe, and had also beene confirmed in the same by myracles: yet that knowledge being couered with the cloud of a reprochful death, might vanish away. Nowe it was more then wonderfull, that hee being rude and a yonglinge, yea, his minde altogether corrupted, should presently at the first instructions vpon the cursed crosse apprehend saluation and the celestiaall glory. For with what markes or ensignes did he see Christe adorned, that hee might lift vp his minde to that kingdome? And certainly this was, as if hee should clime out of the deepest helles about the heauens. But to the fleshe this was but as a fable, and to bee laughed at, to attribute to a man cast away and condemned (whome the worlde could not abide) a kingdome farre more notable then all earthly Empires. Hereby we do gather how quicke the eyes of his minde were, wherewith hee behelde life in death, height in ruine, glory in reproach, victory in destruction, & a kingdome in slavery. If that the theefe extolled by his fayth Christ now hanging vpon the crosse, and as it were overwhelmed with curling, into a heauenly throne, were to our slouthfulnesse if wee doe not reuerence him now sitting at the right hand of God, if we doe not fasten the hope of life in his resurrection, if we goe not into heauen whether hee is entred. Now, if on the other part, we do consider what state he was in, when he besought christ of his mercy, his fayth shall grow to further admiration with a torne body now almost without life, he waiteth for the last blow of the slaughter men, & yet he reposeth himselfe in the onely grace of Christ. First, whence hath he this hope of forgiveness, but because that in the death of Christ, (which seemeth detestable to all other) he conceiueth the sacrifice of a good sauiour, to bee effectually to washe away the sinnes of the world? And where he with courage regardeth not his torments: nay, as it were forgetting himselfe, is caried to a hope & desire of a better life, it doth far passe the vnderstanding of man. Wherefore let vs not be ashamed to learne both mortification of the flesh, & patience, and excellency of fayth, & constancy of hope, and zeale of godlines of this master, whom the Lord set ouer vs, to humble the pride of the flesh. For the readier that any man followeth him, the nearer he shall come to Christ.

43. *Verily I say vnto thee.* Though Christ had not yet triumphed openly ouer death, yet he sheweth the effect and fruit of the same, when he was most abased. And by this meanes he declareth that he was neuer thrust out of the power of his kingdom. For nothing doth more notably, nor more royally besee me a diuine king, then to restore life to the which are dead. Christ therefore, though he being stricken with the hand of God, appeared in shew to bee a man halfe desperate: yet, because he ceased not to be the sauiour of the world, hee was alwayes endued with a heauenly power for the performance of his office. And first here is to be noted his incredible readines, that without delay he accepteth the theefe so louingly, and promisseth him that hee shall be a partaker of the blessed life. Wherefore it is not to bee doubted, but that hee is to admitte without exception into his kingdome, all which doe come vnto him. Whereof it may

may bee assuredly gathered, that wee shall be saued, if hee be mindefull of vs. Further, it cannot be that he should forget them, who doe commend their saluation to him. If the theefe hadde so easie a passage into heauen, because that when all things were in greatest extremitie, he rested vpon the grace of Christ: much more shall Christe the conquerour of death, at this day reach forth his hand out of his throne to vs, that hee may gather vs into the fellowship of life. For it were absurde, since the time that he nailed to the crosse the hand writing which was against vs, and hath put death and Sathan to flight, and in his resurrection hath triumphed ouer the prince of the world, that there should not bee as easy & as ready a passage from death to life for vs, as for the theefe. Therefore, who soeuer being readie to die, shall with a true faith commit the custody of his soule to Christ, hee shall not bee driuen off any long time to languish in suspense: but Christ will accept his desire with the same kindnesse that hee vsed towarde the theefe. Therefore away with that stinking denice of the Sophisters, of the retayning of the paine when the fault is remitted: for we see that Christ doth presently deliuer from punishment, him, whom hee freeth from guiltinesse. Neyther is that any let, that the theefe neuerthelesse, beareth euen to the vttermost, the punishment whereto hee was appoynted. For wee must heere imagine no recompence, which was in steede of a satisfaction for the appeasing of the iudgment of God (as the Sophisters doe dreame) but the Lord by corporall punishments doeth simply teach his elect to detest and to hate sin. Therefore Christ doth as it were set vpon his lappe, the theefe brought by fatherly correction to denie himselfe, and sendeth him not to the fire of Purgatory. It is further to bee noted, with what keyes the gate of the kingdome of heauen was opened to the theefe. For Popish confession or satisfactions, were not heere accounted of: but Christ was entreated with repentance and sayth to receiue him that came willingly to him. And heereby that is againe the better confirmed, which I touched euen now, if any man should disdain to walke in the steppes of the theefe, and to follow as hee went before, he driueth himselfe from entring into heauen. And truely, as in the person of the theefe, Christ hath giuen vnto vs all a common pledge or assurance of obtaining forgiveness, so againe he vouchsafed that wretch so great honour, that all men casting off their owne glory, wee should not glory but in the mercy of God alone. If that every one of vs would truely and earnestly search himselfe, the great heape of our sinnes would worthily make vs ashamed of our selues, and it would irke vs to take this poore man, who of meere grace obtained saluation, as our guide and stander bearer. Further, as the death of Christ brought forth the fruite of the same then presently, so wee doe heereof gather, that the soules when they doe departe from the bodies doe remaine and liue: otherwise the promise of Christ should bee but a iest, which hee also confirmed with an oath. Yet of the place of Paradise, let vs not curiously and subtilly dispute. Let it suffice vs, that who soeuer are by sayth grafted into the body of Christ, are partakers of his life, and so after death shall enioy a blessed and a ioyfull rest, vntill the perfect glory of the heauenly life, shall fully be reuealed at the comming of Christ.

One thing yet remaineth, that he promifeth the theeſe, not to take away his preſent miſeries, nor to diminith any thing of his corporall puniſhment. Where by we are admoniſhed that the grace of God muſt not be eiteemed by the iudgment of the fleſh: for it doth oft fall out that God doth ſuffer them to be miſerably afflicted, whom yet he loueth. Therefore if we be miſerably vexed in body, let vs take heede leaſt the bitterneſſe of greiſe, take away the taſt of the goodneſſe of God, but rather let this one comfort temper and mollifie all our euils, aſſoone as God taketh vs into his fauour, what troubles ſoeuer wee doe ſuffer, they doe further vs towards ſaluation. So it ſhall come to paſſe, that our ſayth ſhall not onely eſcape from all miſeries with the victory, but it ſhall iweercely be at reſt euen in the midſt of the bearing of afflictions.

Mathew 27.

Marke 15

Luke 23.

45. Now from the ſixt houre was there darkeneſſe ouer all the land vnto the ninth houre,

46. And about the ninth houre Ieſus cried with a loude voyce ſaying: Eli, Eli, lamaſabaſthanie? that is My God, my God why haſt thou forſaken mee,

47. And ſome of them that ſtood there, when they heard it, ſaide: This man calleth Elias

48. And ſtraight way one of them ran, and tooke a ſponge, & filled it with vinegar, and put it on a reede & gaue hym to drinke

49. Oſther ſaid let be let vs ſee, if Elias will com and ſaue him.

50. Then Ieſus cried again with a loude voyce and yeelded vp the ghoſt,

51. And behold the vaile of the Temple was rent in twaine, from the toppe to the bottome, and the earth did quake, and the ſtones were clouen.

52. And the graues did open themſelues, & many bodies of the Saintes, which ſlepte aroſe.

53. And came out of the graues after his reſurrection, and went into the holy Citie, and appeared vnto many.

33. Now when the ſixt houre was come darkeneſſe aroſe ouer all the land vntill ninth houre.

34. And at the ninth houre Ieſus cried with a loude voyce ſaying: Eloi, Eloi, lamaſabaſthan? which is by interpretation: my God, my God why haſt thou forſaken me?

35. And ſome of them that ſtood by, when they heard it, ſaid: Behold, he calleth Elias

36. And one ranne & filled a ſponge full of vinegar & put it on a reede, & gaue hym to drinke ſaying, let him alone let vs ſee if Elias will come and take him downe.

37. And Ieſus cried with a loud voyce and gaue vpp the ghoſt.

38. And the vaile of the Temple was rent in twaine from top to the bottome.

39. Now when the Centurion, which ſtood ouer againſt hym ſawe that he thus crying gaue vpp the ghoſt, he ſaid: Truly this man was the Son of God.

44. And it was about the ſixt houre, & there was a darkeneſſe ouer all the land, vntill the ninth houre

45. And the Sunne was darkened and the vaile of the Temple rent through the mids.

46. And Ieſus cried with a loude voyce, & ſaid: Father, into thine handes I commend my ſpirite. And when hee thus had ſaid, he gaue vp the ghoſt.

47. Nowe when the Centurion ſawe what was done, hee glorified God ſaying: of a ſurety this man was iuſt.

48. And all the people that came together to that ſight beholding the thinges which were done ſmote their breſts and returned.

34. When the Centurion, and they that were with him watching Iesus, sawe the earth quake and the things that were done they feared greatly saying, Truly this was the son of God

35. And many women were there beholding him a farre off which had followed Iesus from Galile, ministring vnto him.

36 Among whome was Mary Magdalen and Mary the mother of Iames and Ioscs, and the mother of Zebedeus sonnes.

40. There were also women which beheld a far off among whome was Mary Magdalen & Mary the mother of Iames the lesse: and of Ioscs and Salome,

41. Which also when hee was in Galile, followed him, and ministrd vnto him, and many other womenne, which came vp with him vnto Ierusalem.

49. And all his acquaintaunce stood a far off and the woman that followed him from Galile beholding these things.

45. Now from the sixth houre. Though in the death of Christ the infirmity of the flesh for a while, couered the glory of the Godhead; yea the Sonne of God himselfe lay without forme vnder reproch and contempt, and (as Paul sayth) he was made of no reputation: yet the heauenly father ceased not to adorne him with some marks, and when he was at the lowest cast, hee erected some tokens of the glory to come, which might strengthen the mindes of the godly against the offence of the crosse. So the maiestie of Christ was royally set forth by the darkning of the sunne, earthquake, cleauing of rockes, and renting of the vaile: euen as if heauen and earth should yeelde the worshippe due to their maker and framer. But first it is demanded for what purpose the sunne was eclipsed. For where the old Poets in their tragedies do faigne that the light of the sun is withdrawne from the earth, where any notable offence is committed, tendeth to note the greatnes of the wrath of God, and this fantasie was gathered of the common sense of nature. Therefore some interpreters do think that God sent darknes in signe of detestation: as if god by darkning the sun, shuld hide his face fro the most filthy wickednes of all. Others doe say, that by the darknes of the visible sunne was the death of the sunne of righteousness declared. Others hadde rather to apply it to the making of that nation blind, which followed shortly after. For the Iewes reiecting Christ, after he was taken from amongst the, were deprived of the light of the heauenly doctrine, neither was there any thing left them besides the darknes of desperation. But I do rather thinke that this people because they would not see the light, they were so blockish, were stirred vp by darknes, to consider the wonderfull counsell of God in the death of Christ. For the vnwonted alteration of the order of nature, if they had not bene altogether hardened, shuld haue earnestly moued their senses, to attend to that renewing of the world to come. In the meane while a sight full of terrour was shewed them, that they might feare before the iudgment of God. And truly this was an incomparable testimony of the wrath of God, that spared not his onely begotten Sonne, neyther could hee otherwise bee appeased, then by the price of that sacrifice. But where the Scribes and Priestles, and a great part of the people

carelessly neglected, and as it were with closed eyes passed by the darkening of the Sunne, their wonderfull madnesse shoulde make vs afraide. For they must of necessitie bee more blockiſhe then the brute beastes, who beeing warned by such a wonder, of the rigour of the heavenly iudgement, ceased not their scoffing. But this is the spirit of amasednesse and giddinesse, wherewith God maketh the reprobate drunken, after that he hath long striven with their malice. In the meane while let vs learne, that after they are bewitched with the sleights of Sathan, the glory of G O D, bee it neuer so manifest, is hidden from them, at the least their mindes are darkened, that seeing they shoulde not see. But sith that was a general admonition, it should profite vs at this day, to lette vs knowe that the sacrifice wherewith wee are redeemed, was of no lesse moment, then if the Sunne hadde fallen from heauen, or that the whole frame of the worlde hadde bene ouerthrowne: for so wee may bee brought the more to abhorre our sinnes. Further, where some doe thinke that this darkening of the Sunne was ouer all the quarters of the worlde, I doe not thinke it to bee likely. For though some one writter or another, haue so reported, yet the hystorie of those times was more renowned, then that so notable a myracle could be conceale of many others, who diligently searched and sette downe things which werenot so worthy of remembrance. Further, if that the darkenesse had bene generally ouer the whole, men might the more easily haue forgotten it, because it might haue bene supposed to bee naturall. But the wonder was the more straunge, that the sunne shining other where, Iudea shoulde bee ouerwhelmed with darknesse.

46. *About the ninth heoure Iesus cried.* Though there appeared more the force of a man in the crying of Christ, yet it is certaine that the vehemencie of griefe wrested it out of him. And certainly this was the chiefe conflict, and sharper then all other torments, because that in his sorrows, he was not so comforted with the ayde and fauour of his father, that hee thought himselfe in some sort forsaken. For he not onely offered his body for the price of our reconciliation with God, but in soule hee also bore the punishments due to vs: and so hee rightly became a man full of sorrows, as Isai. 53. 3. speaketh. And truly they are too foolish, which passing by this part of the redemption, do onely rest vpon the outward punishment of the flesh. For to the end that Christe might make satisfaction for vs, it was behouefull for him to stand as guilty beefore the iudgement seat of God. And there is nothing more horrible the to feele Gods iudge, whose wrath exceedeth all deathes. Therefore, when this kinde of temptation is layd vpon Christ, as if God beeing his enemy, he should now be giuen ouer to destruction, he is taken with horror, wherein all mortall men had bene swallowed vp a hundred times, but he by the marvellous power of the spirit escaped with the victory. And hee maketh not his complaint dissemblingly or after the manner of a plaier, that he was forsaken of his father. And where many doe pretend that he spake thus according to the opinion of the common people, it is but a fond caull: for the inward sorrowe of the minde compelled him forceably & earnestly to breake out into this cry. And it was not onely a redemption to serue the eye which hee wrought (as I saye euen now): but as hee hadde offered himselfe a pledge for vs, his will was to beare in deede the iudgement of God in

our place. But it seemeth to be absurd, that this desperate speech should passe from Christ. The answer is easie, though the sence of the flesh beheld destruction, yet his faith was fast settled in his heart, wherein hee beheld God present, of whose absence he complaineth. We sayd other where that the Godhead gaue place to the infirmity of the flesh, so farre forth as was meete for our saluation, to the end Christ might fulfill all the partes of a redeemer. We haue also noted the difference betweene the sence of nature, and the knowledg of faith, wherefore there is no cause to hinder it, but that Christ might in minde conceiue an alienation from God, so farre as sence did see, and withall by faith he held GOD mercifull vnto him. The which doeth evidently enough appeare by the two partes of his complaint, for before he would vtter the temptation, he first protesteth that hee fleeth to God as to his God: and so with the shield of faith, hee valiantly repelled that assault of forsaking, which assaulted him on the other side. To bee short, in this sharpe torment his faith remained safe: so he complaining that hee was forsaken, yet trusted in the helpe of God at hand. Further that this speech was worthy especially to be noted, it doth appeare by this, that the holy Ghost, to the end it might be imprinted in mans memory, would haue it reported in the Syrian tongue: for this is as much as if he shuld bring in Christ, rehearsing the same words, which he then vttered with his owne mouth, So much the more is their slouth thereby to bee condemned as vile, who make no more account of Christs so great sorrow & dreadful feare, then as if they passed lightly by a place. But who soeuer considerth that Christ tooke vpon him self person of a mediator, of this condition, that he might beare our guiltines as well in soule as in body, will not maruaile that he had to strue with the sorrowes of death, as if he should be cast off from God in his wrath, into a laborinth of euils.

47. *This man calleth Elias.* They which doe referre this to the soldiours, who were rude and ignorant of the Syrian tongue, and not accustomed to the Iewish religion, are in my iudgement deceiued, for they thinke that the likenes of the speeches deceiued them. But I doe not thinke it any way probable, that they slipped of ignorance, but rather that it was determined of set purpose to scorne at Christe, and quarrellingly to peruert his speech. For satan hath no apter deuice for the hindrance of the saluation of the godly, then when he driueth them from calling vpon God. Therefore so much as lyeth in him, he driueth his ministers to this, to quench our affection to prayer. So he driue the vngodly enemies of Christ, wickedly to turne his prayer into laughter: seeking by that shift to spoyle him of his cheife weapons. And certainly this is a very great temptatiō when wee seeme to be so farre from preuayling, that God rather should lay his name open to reproches, then shew himselfe fauourable to our prayers. Therefore this ironical or doggish barking was asmuch, as if they had denied christ to haue any thing to doe with God, that calling vpon Elias, he should repose himselfe in another refuge. So we see him vexed on euery side, that he being overwhelmed with desperation might cease from calling vpon GOD, which was to renounce saluation. But if at this day as wel the hired slaves of Antichrist as also the varlets which are at home with vs, doe wickedly with their quarrels depraue those things which wee haue spoken well, let vs not maruaile that the same befall to vs, which fell to our head.

Yet though they should transfigure God into Eliah, when they haue scorned vs at their pleasure, at the length God will heare our sighes, and will shew himself partly a defender of his owne glory, partly one that will plague their filthy falsehood.

48. *And straight way one of them ran.* Hereof a probable coniecture may be gathered, that when Christe had once refused drinke, it was offered to him againe to trouble him. Though withal it is likely, that at the first he had vineger reached vnto him in a cup beefore that hee was lifted vp on high, afterward when he now hung vpon the Crosse, it was put to his mouth in a sponge.

M A R. 36. *Saying, let him alone* That which Marke here deliuereth that a soldour reaching him vineger, said, *Let him alone: let vs see, &c.* And Mattheue attributeth this speech to others, there is no epugnancy in it. For it is likely that one began the scorning, whiche beeing greedily accepted by others, raised this cry amongst them all. So the word *Let him alone*, is not a word of forbidding, but of scorning. Therefore hee which scorned Christe, speaking ironically to his fellowes, *Let vs see*, saith he, whether Elias will come, presently others followed, and euery one singe the same song to his neighbour: as it commonly cometh to passe in such mutual agreement. And it is no matter to stand either vpon the plural number or the singular: for let him alone signifieth as much in the singular number, as in the plural: for the verbe is put in steede of an interiection, as if they had said, *st, st.*

50. *Then Iesus cryed againe.* Luke, who maketh no mention of the first crying, doth report the wordes of the second cry, which Mattheue and Marke doe passe ouer. And hee saith that hee cryed, *Father, into thy handes I commend my spirit*: wherein hee declareth, that though hee hadde bene hardly shaken with violent temptations, yet his faith was not shaken, but alwayes kept his place inuincible. For there could not haue bene a more notable triumph shewed, then when Christe boldly bragged that G O D was a faithfull keeper of his soule, whiche all menne thought to bee lost. Further, beecause hee hadde spoken to the deafe, hee went straight to God, and layde downe the testimony of his faith in his lappe. His will was that men shoulde heare that which hee spake: but though he preuailed nothing with men, he was content that God alone did witness with him. And truly faith cannot bee more certainly and firmly approued, then where a godly man when hee seeth himselfe beaten on euery side, that he findeth no comfort in men, despising the madness of all the worlde, doth vnlade his sorrowes and cares in the bosome of God, and resteth in the hope of his promises.

And though it seemeth that he tooke this maner of prayer, which he vsed out of the Psal, 31.6: yet I doubt not, but that according to the circumstance of the time, he applied the sãe to his present vse, as if he had said, *I see O father my selfe by al mens moutes appointed to destruction, & my soule drawne after a sort hither & thither: and in the meane while according to the flesh I do feelee no helpe in thee.* Yet that shal not stop me, but that I wil lay vp my spirit in thy handes, & will quietly lie downe in the secret custody of thy goodnes. Yet it is to be noted that Dauid in that place which I cited euẽ now, praied not onely for this, that his soule beeing receiued into the hand of God, might remaine aliue and safe after death, but

but he commended his life to the Lord, that being protected by his defence, he might be in happy estate either liuing or dying. Hee saw himselfe continually assaulted with many deaths: therefore nothing remained, but that he should commit himselfe to the inuincible defence of God. Further, where hee appointeth God to be the keeper of his soule, he gloryeth that it is safe from all danger: and withal he quietly prepareth himselfe to meete with death, whē it shuld so seeme good to God, because that euen in death, the Lorde himselfe doeth keepe the soules of his children. Now, because that was first taken away from Christ, that he should comit to his father his soule to bee preserved in the transitory estate of the earthly life, he going chearefully to die, desireth to be sauēd out of the world. For therefore doth God chiefly receiue our soules into his custodie, that our hope shoulde clime vp about this shadowish life. Now, let vs remember that Christe commended his soule to his father not in his owne priuate respectē but comprehended al the soules of his faithfull ones as it were in one bundle, that they might be sauēd together with his. Yea in this prayer he begate vnto himselfe this right of preleruing all soules, so that the heavenly Father not onely for fauour of him vouchsafeth to take them into his custodie, but resigning those things which belonged to himselfe to him, he comitted them to him to be preserved. And therefore Stephen at his death deliuered his soule into his hand *Act. 7. 56.* Lord Iesus sayth hee, receiue my spirit. By whose example whosoever will beleue in Christe, shall not at his death breath out his soule into the ayre, but it shall goe to a faithfull keeper, who keepeth safely whatsoeuer is comitted vnto him of the father. The cry doeth shew againe the vehemency of the affection: for it is not to be doubted but that Christ brake not out of the straites of temptations wherein he was holdē bound, without earnest & ardent trauaile. Though withall, by his hie & loud crying, his wil was to declare to vs, that his soule shuld be preserved and safe from death, to the end that we being furnished with the same hope, might chearefully depart out of this transitory cottage of our flesh.

51. And beholde the vaile of the temple. Where Luke mixeth the renting of the vaile, with the darkening of the Sunne, as if it befell before the death of Christ, is an inverting of the order. For the Euangelistes doe not exactly obserue the moments of times as it is often scene. And it was not likely that the vaile shoulde be rent, before the sacrifice of expiation was finished: because Christe the true and eternall Priest abolishing the figures of the law, then opened to vs by his blood the way to the heavenly sanctuary, that we should not stand nowe a farre off in the Courte, but come freely forth into the sight of GOD. For so long as the worshipping of God in shadowes endured, there was a vaile sette vpe in the earthly sanctuary, which kept thence not only the peoples seete, but also their eyes. But Christe wiping out the hand wryting which was contrary to vs, *Col. 2. 14.* took away all hinderance, that we enioyinge him for a mediator, shoulde be all made a royall Priesthoode. Therefore the renting of the vaile, was not onely the abrogation of the ceremonies, which were of force vnder the lawe, but also an opening of the heauens, so that now God doth familiarly call the members of his Sonne vnto him. In the meane while the Iewes were admonished, that the outwarde sacrifices

were ended, & that afterward there should be no use of the old priesthood: although the building of h temple shuld stand, God was no more to be worshipped after the accustomed order: but because the substance and truth of the shadowes were now fulfilled, the figures of the law are turned into the spirit. For though Christ offered a visible sacrifice, yet it must bee spiritually esteemed, (as the Apostle teacheth in the Epistle to the Heb 9. 14.) that the price & fruit of the same may appeare. But the outward sanctuary profited nothing to miserable me, when the vaile being broken, it was left naked: for the inward vaile of their infirmities tooke from them the sight of the light of their saluation. That which Matthew addeth of the quaking of the earth, and of the cleauing of the rockes was done in the very same moment, as I by some probability doe gather. Also the earth by this meanes not onely gaue testimony to the creatour of it: but is also cited as a witness against the hardness of a cursed nation. For hereby it appeared what wonderfull obstinacy this was, which neither the shaking of the earth, nor the cleauing of the stones could moue.

52. *And the graues opened.* This was also a speciall wonder, whereby God declared that his sonne entred into the prison of death, not that hee should remaine prisoner there, but that he might bring out all, which were holden captiues. For at what time as the contemptible infirmity of the flesh was to be seene in the person of Christ, the royall and diuine power of his death pierced euen to the places below. This is the reason why he being presently to bee layde in the graue, should open all other graues. Yet it is doubted whether the graues were opened before the resurrection. For the resurrection of the Saints, which is added a little after, in my iudgement followed after the resurrection of Christ. For it is absurd, which some interpreters doe imagine that they should lye aliue & breathing for the space of three dayes in the graue. To me it seemeth probable that at Christs death, the graues presently opened: and when hee rose, some of the godly receiued breath, went forth, and were seene in the cittie. For Christ is therefore called the first borne of the dead, and the first fruits of them that rose againe, 1. Cor. 15. 20 Col. 1. 18. For by his death he began a new life, and by his resurrection hee performed the same: not that the dead at his death should presently be reuiued, but because his death was the fountaine & beginning of life. This reason therefore doth notably agree, when the breaking open of the graues should be a prophesie of a new life, the fruit it selfe, or the effecte whereof, appeared three dayes after: for Christ rising he brought out with him other companions out of the graues. Further, by this token it was declared, that he neither died nor rose againe priuately for him selfe, but that he might breath forth a fauour of life vpon all the faithfull. Yet here groweth a questiō, why god would that some only should rise againe, when as the society of the resurrection of Christ equally appertained to all the faithfull. I doe answer, because that the time was not yet full come, when the whole body of the Church should be gathered to their heade, there was a shewe of the newe life sette forth in a fewe, which all are to hope for. For wee doe know that Christe was on this condition receiued vpp into the heauens, that the life of his members shoulde as yet be hidden, vntill that it should be manifested at his comming, Col. 3. 3. 4. But

But that the godly mindes might the more comfortably stirre vp themselves in hope, it was profitable that the resurrection which should be common to all, should be tasted of in some few. The other question is more difficult, what afterward became of these Sainctes : for it seemeth absurd, after they were once admitted by Christe to be partakers of the newe life, that they should againe retourne into the dust. But as the answer is neither easie nor ready, so it is to no purpose to labour much in a matter not necessary to be knowne. It is not likely that they continued long in the company of menne : for it was behouefull that they should be seene onely for a short time, that the power of Christ might be made manifest in that glasse or image. But sith the will of God was in the person of them, to confirme amongst them which liue, the hope of the heavenly life, it shall not be absurde, if we say that when they had done this duetie, they againe rested in their graues. Yet it is more likely that the life which was giuen them, was not after taken from them. For if it had beene a mortall life, it could not haue beene a testimony of a perfect resurrection. Further, though the whole world should arise, and Christ should no lesse raise the wicked to iudgement, then the faithfull to saluation, yet because that he properly rose for his Churches cause, of right he bestowed so great honour onely vpon his Sainctes, that they should arise together with him.

Where Mathewe doeth honourably call Hierusalem a holy Citie, he doeth not giue it this title, in respect of the merites of the Citizens : (for we know that it was then filled with all blthinesse of sinnes, so that it rather was a denne of theenes) but because it had beene chosen of God, that holinesse which was established by Gods adoption, could be blotted out by no corruption of men, vntill the reprobation of the same should be made manifest. Or if any manne would haue a shorter answer, on the behalfe of men it was prophane, on the behalfe of GOD it was holy, vntill the ouerthrow or pollution of the Temple, which befell not long after Christ was crucified.

54. *When the Centurion.* Sith Luke made mention of the lamentation of the people, not onely the Centurion with his souldiers acknowledged Christe to be the Sonne of GOD : but the Euangelistes doe expressly report this of him, for the amplifying of the matter : because it should be a wonder, that a prophane man, not brought vp in the law, but void of true godlynes, should get that iudgement of those signes which he saw. Which comparison auailed not a litle to condemne the blockishnes of the city. For it was a signe of horrible madnes, that none of the Iewes, besides the simple common people were moued by the shaking & trembling of the frame of the world. Though god in so grosse blindnes suffered not the testimonies which he gaue of his sonne to be hidden. So not onely true religion made the pure worshippers of God to see, that they might see the glory of Christe set forth frō heauen, but the very sense of nature compelled strāgers, yea, and soldiers, to cōfesse that which they learned neither out of the law, nor of masters. Because Mar. saith & the Centurion said so, for that Christ hauing cryed loud, had giuen vp the ghost, some interpreters doe thinke that he noted some vnwonted force, which remained strōg enu to death, & truly, sith the body of Christ was almost without bloud, this could not be after the maner of menne, that the strength of his sides and arteries should abide so loud a cry. Yet I doe rather thinke that the Centurion payed his constant

perseuerance in calling vpon the name of God. Though not onely Christes crying induced him, to thinke honourably of him, but beecause hee saw his great power to agree with the heauenly myracle, he vttered this confession. But where it is sayd that hee feared God, it must not be expounded so, as if he should repen throughly: it was onely a sodaine vanishing motion: as it doeth oft befall that vaine men, and such as are giuen to the worlde, are moued with the feare of God, when he sheweth forth his fearefull power. but because there is not a roote vnder, which hath life, securitie presently groweth ouer, which quencherth that feeling. The Centurion therefore was not so chaunged, as that he would yeeld himselfe to serue God the rest of his life, but he was onely a publisser of the god head of Christ for a short time. And where Luke reporteth that he onely sayde *Ecce factus est hic meus iustus*. is as muche as if he shoulde haue openly declared him to bee the Sonne of God, as the two other Euangelistes doe report. For fame had spredde it euery where, that Christe was punished, beecause hee bore himselfe for the sonne of God: Now, when the Centurion prayseth him to be iust, and freeth him from fault, hee withall confesseth him to bee the Sonne of God: not that he distinctly vnderstoode how Christ was beegotten of God the father, but because he doubted not but that some diuine power was in him, and as one conuict by the former testimonies, he accounted him to be no common person, but raised vppe by God. As concerning the multitude striking their breastes, they pray earnestly for the auoidance of the guiltinesse of that hainous offence, beecause they perceived that there was a hainous offence committed publicly in that vniust and cruell slaughter. But because they proceeded no further, their mourning auailed them nothing: except that to some it was a beginning or a preparation of a better repentaunce. But because here is only described to vs the lamentation, which God wrested out of them for the glory of his Sonne, let vs learne by this example that it is little or nothing, if any man bee afraid at the present power of God, vntill the astonishment being appeased the feare of God may rest in a quiet heart.

55. *And many women were there.* This was added as I doe interpret it, to let vs vnderstand that when the disciples were slipt away by fleeing hither and thither, yet the Lord kept some of their company there to bee as witnesses. And though Iohn the Apostle departed not from the crosse, yet heere is no mention made of him: but onely the women are praysed, whiche followed Christe euen vnto death: for the men fleeing fearefully away, their singular pietie towards their maister, appeared the more euidently. For it cannot be but that they had a rare and great affection, who though they could doe him no seruice, yet when he was in his extreamest reproches, they ceased not to haue him in reuerent estimation: yet all menne fledde not as wee doe gather by Luke, for hee sayeth that all his acquaintance stood a farre off. But the Euangelistes doe especially prayse the women, and that not without cause, for they were woorthy to bee preferred beefore the menne. And in my iudgement this secret comparison doeth greatly reprooue the Apostles. I speake of the body of them: for beecause there was one onely of them remaining who carryed, of whom (as I sayde euen now) three Euangelistes doe say nothing. But this was very reproachfull to the chosen witnesses, to withdrawe them.

themselves from beholding that, whereof the saluation of the world depended. Therefore, when afterwarde they should publish the Gospell, the chiefe part of the hystorie was borrowed of the women. The which if the prouidence of God had not met with in so wicked a nation, they had deprived vs of the knowledge of the redemption. But though there seemeth not to be so great authority in women, yet if we do consider with what power of the spirit they were strenghtened against that temptation, there shall be no cause why our faith should wauer which resteth vpon God, the true authour of the testimonie. In the meane while let vs note that it came to passe by the wonderfull goodnesse of God, that the Gospell of the sacrifice of satisfaction wherby God was reconciled to vs, came vnto vs. For in that common falling away of them, who should haue gone before others, God encouraged some of the meanest of the flock, who casting off feare, should become witness to vs of that hystorie, without the beleife whereof we could not be saued. But of those women, somewhat shall presently be spoken againe. For this present let it suffice to note this one thinge by the way, they were brought from their countrey with a desire to learne, that they might dayly heare Christ teach: they neyther spared labour nor riches, so that they might enioy the doctrine of saluation.

Math. 27.

Marke. 15.

Luke 23.

57. And when the euen was come there came a rich man of Arimathea, named Ioseph, who had also him selfe been Iesus disciple 58. He went to Pilate, and asked the body of Iesus. Then Pilate commanded the body to be deliuered 59. So Ioseph tooke the body, & wrapped it in a cleane linnen cloth, 60. And put it in his new tombe which he had hewen out in a rock, and rolled a great stone to the doore of the sepulchre, & departed. 61. And there was Mary Magdalene, & the other Mary sitting ouer against the doore of the sepulchre.

42. And now when night was come, because it was the day of the perparation, that is before the Sabbath, 43. Ioseph of Arimathea, an honorable counsellour, which also looked for the kingdom of god came and went in boldly vnto Pilate, & asked the body of Iesus. 44. And Pilate marueled if he were already dead and called vnto him the Centurion & asked of him whether he had been any while dead. 45. And when he knew the truth of the Centurion, hee gaue the body to Ioseph, 46. Who bought a linnen cloth, & tooke him down, & wrapped him in the linnen cloth & laied him in a tombe that was hewen out of a rocke and rolled a stone to the doore of the sepulchre: 47. And Mary Magdalene & Mary Ioses mother beheld where he should be laid.

50. And beholde, there was a manne named Ioseph, which was a counsellour, a good man and a iust. 51. Hee did not consent to the counsell and deede of them, which was of Arimathea a citie of the Iewes: who also him selfe wanted for the kingdom of God. 52. He went vnto Pilate & asked the body of Iesus. 53. And tooke it downe & wrapped it in a linnen cloth, & laied it in a tombe hewen out of a rock wherein was neuer man yet layed 54. And that day was the preparation, & the sabbath drew on. 55. And the women also that followed after, which came with him from Galilee, bekeid the sepulchre, and howe his body was layed. 56. And they returned and prepared odours and oymments, and rested the sabbath day according to the commaundement.

Now

Now followeth the buriall of Christ, as a mid way betweene the ignominy of the crosse, and the glory of the resurrection, God would also that his son should be buried for another cause that so it might be the better declared that he suffered death for vs in deede. But heere in the meane while must the end be especially considered, because that by this meanes the curle began to be abolished, which he had borne for a while. Neither was his dead body cast into a pit after the common maner, but it was honourably layd in a hewen tombe. And though the infirmitie of the flesh was then yet before the eyes, & that the diuine power of the spirit, is not euidently seene before the resurrection: yet God would as it were shadow forth by this beginning, that which a little after hee was about to doe, that he might royally lift vp his Sonne the conquerour of death about the heauens.

57. *And when the euen was come.* Vnderstand that Ioseph came not at the day light going downe, but before the sunne was set, that hee might performe this dutie of charity to the maister without the breach of the sabboth. Therefore it was necessary that Christ should be layd in the graue before it was darke night. Also, from the death of Christ vnto the time of the obseruation of the sabboth, there remained 3. houres free. And though Iohn doth not onely make mention of Ioseph, but ioyneth also Nichodemus with him as a companion: yet because hee alone tooke the matter in hand at the first, and Nichodemus only followed him as the guide and authour, it was sufficient for the 3. Euangelistes in a short hystorie to report what was done of one of them. Nowe, though the affection of Ioseph was worthy of wonderfull praise, yet first we must consider the wonderfull providence of God, in that he chose a noble man & one of great dignitie amongst his people, who should beginne to couer the reproch of the crosse with the honor of buriall. And truely, when as he threw himselfe into the enuie and hatred of the whole nation, yea, and into great dangers, it is not to be doubted but that he was greatly strengthened by the secret instinct of the spirit. For though hee had beene before one of Christes disciples, yet hee durst neuer professe his faith freely & openly. Now, when in the death of Christ there was to bee seene a sight full of desperation, the which might also breake very manly hearts, whence then of a sodain had he so stout a courage, that amongst so great terrours he fearing nothing, durst go further, then when matters were at quiet? Let vs therefore vnderstand that it came of God, that the sonne of God was buried by the hande of Ioseph. Hether also must bee referred the circumstances which are noted here, the godlinesse and integritie of the life of Ioseph. that we might learne to acknowledge the worke of God in the seruant of God. The Euangelists do report that he was rich, that wee might know that he ouercame that let of the wonderfull loynes of the minde, which otherwise had compelled him to goe backwardes. For as rich men are proud, so nothing is more difficult to the, then willingly to abide the contempt of the common people. And wee know how foule and infamous a worke it should be, to take the dead body of a man crucified at the hand of the slaughter man. Further the greater estate he was of, the more wary and also fearefull he had beene (as men giuen to their riches, doe vse to flee all danger) except he had beene enboldned from heauen. The dignitie of his calling is also sette downe, that he should bee a Counsellour or
 Senator,

Senator, that in this behalfe also the power of God might shine forth : because hee is not one of the base sort of men hired or set a worke, by stealth or secretly to bury the body of Christ, but he was of hie degree of honour that was stirred vp to performe this duty. For the more incredible it was that he should be ready to serue christ thus religiously, the more euidently it appeared that the whole action was governed by the counsell and hand of God. But by this example we are taught that rich menne are so farre from excuse, if they should defraud christ of the honour due to him, that they should be rather guilty of a double offence, while they make hinderance of those spurs wherewith they should be pricked forwards. I doe grant that this is too much vsuall and comon, that they should withdraw themselves out of the yoke, which seeme to excell others, that they may become too dainty and choise, or to owise and fearefull. But we must take a farre other course : except riches and honours be helps vnto vs in the seruice of God, we doe wickedly abuse him. The circumstance of the time doeth declare how easie a matter it is for God to take away corrupt and fearefull affections, which do hinder vs from our duty. Before, whē matters were in doubt, Ioseph durst not freely professe himselfe to be Christes disciple: now, when the fury of the enemies is hottest, and cruelly appeareth, he taketh courage, so that he doubteth not to cast himselfe into open danger. Therefore we see how the Lord in a moment turneth the hearts into new affections, and by the spirite of fortitude stineth vp them which before had falne. But if Ioseph was so bolde in a godly endenour to honour Christe, when hee hung dead vpon the crosse, if at this day, after he is risen frō the dead, we haue not the same zeale in our hearts at the least to glorifie him, woe be to our sluggishness.

MAR. 43. LV. 51. *Who also himselfe waited for the kingdom of God.* This was the chiefe prayse which Ioseph had, that he waited for the kingdom of god. He is also prayed for his righteousness, but this waiting for the kingdō of God, was the roote & beginning of righteousness. By the *kingdom of God*, vnderstand the restitution promised in Christ. For the excellency of the estate, which the Prophets had euery where promised to be at the coming of Christ, could not stand, if God gathered not vnder his gouernement, men which were dispersed abroad. So the godlines of Ioseph in this point is commended, because that in so miserable a state, he nourished the hope of redemption which God had promised. Hence also groweth the feare of God, and a desire to lue holy and righteously. For it could not be, that any man shuld giue himselfe to serue God, but he which hopeth to be deliuered by him. But let vs note, that where saluation in Christ was generally appointed for al the Iewes, and the promise of the same was common to them all, the holy Ghost doeth giue this testimony but of very few, which in this place we do heare of Ioseph. Whereby it appeareth that the incomparable grace of God was then buried through the malicious forgetfulness almost of all the people. This brag ran euery where in all men of tongues, that Christ should come : but the covenant of God was fixed but in the mindes of few, which beleued in that spirituall renouation. Truly, their blindness was horrible : & therefore it was no mervaille if pure religion waxed out of vye, and the hope of saluation extinguished.

But woulde to G O D the corruption of this vnhappy age were not like to it. Christe once appeared as a redeemer to the Iewes, and to the whole world,

world, as it was testified by the prophesyings of the Prophets: hee created the kingdom of God, by bringing things out of confusion into a right and lawfull order, he hath appointed vs a time of warfare, wherein he exerciseth our patience, vntill that he shall come againe from heauen, to performe that his kingdom which he hath begun. What one man doth aspire, yea but a little to that hope? Are not all men almost so bent to the worlde, as if there were no resurrection promised? But how soeuer the greater part forgetfull of their end, doe sitte hither and thither, let vs remember that this vertue is proper to the faithfull, to seeke for those things which are aboue, Col. 3. 1. and especially sith the grace of God hath appeared by the Gospell, teaching vs to deny vngodlinesse and worldly lustes, and that wee should liue soberly and righteously in this present world, looking for the blessed hope, & appearing of the glory of the mighty God, Tit 2. 11. 12. 13.

59. *And when hee had receiued the body.* The three Euangelists doe briefly set downe the buriall: and therefore they doe make no mention of the sweete oynments, which only Iohn doth speake of: they do onely report that Ioseph bought fine cleane linnē. Wherby we do gather that he was honourably buried. And it is not to be doubted sith that a rich man allowed his own tounge to the Lord, but that in all other things hee also performed what was conuenient for the furnishing & adorning of the same. And this also befell rather by the secret providence of God, then by the premeditate counsell of menne, that the Lord gate a new tombe in which none had yet bene layed, who is the first begotten of the dead, and the first fruite of them that rise againe, Col. 1. 18. 1. Cor. 15. 20. So the Lord by this token distinguished his Sonne frō all the company of mankinde, and he set forth newnes of life in the sepulchre it selfe.

61. *And there was Mary Magdalen.* Marke and Matthew do only report that the woman beheld what should bee done, and noted the place where the body should be layed. But Luke also doth withall declare their purpose: namely, that they returning into the city, might prepare odours and oynments, that the second day after they might solemnize the fūerall according to their order. Wherby we doe know that their minds were perfumed with a better odor, which the Lord breathed forth at his death, that hee might lift them higher which were brought to his sepulchre.

Matthew 27.

62. *Nowe, thenext day that followed the preparation of the Sabbath, the hie Priestes and Pharisees assembled to Pilat.*

63. *And said: Sir, we remember that that deceiuer sayd, while he was yet aliue: within three dayes I will rise.*

64. *Command therefore that the sepulchre bee made sure vntill the third daye, least his disciples come by night, and steale him away, & say vnto the people, he is risen from the dead: so the last error shal be worse then*

Marke.

Luke.

then the first.

65. Then Pilate said vnto them: ye haue a watch, goe and make it sure, as yee know.

66. And they went and made the sepulchre sure with the watch, and sealed the stone.

62. Now the next day. In this hystory, the purpose of Mathew was not so much to shew, with what obstinate fury the Scribes & Priestes persecuted Christ as to represent vnto vs, as it were in a glasse, the wonderfull prouidence of God approued in the resurrection of his sonne. Subtle men exercised in fraudes and treachery, doe conspire amongst themselues, and deuise a meanes wherby they may extinguishe the memory of the dead man. For they see that they haue preuayled nothing, except they shoulde ouerwhelme the faith of the resurrection. But truely, while they endeouour to bring that to passe, they do bring the knowledge of the same to light, as if it were of set purpose. Certainly, the resurrection of Christ had not bin so manifest, or at least they might haue had more libertie to denie the same, if they had not prouided to place witnesses at the graue. Therefore we see that the Lord doeth not onely deceiue subtle menne, but also catching them in their owne counsels as in snares, he draweth and compellerh them to obey him. The enemies of Christ were vnworthy that his resurrection should be made manifest to them: but it was meet that their impudency should be reprocud, and the pretence of speaking euill taken from them, yea, and their consciences conuincid, that they should not be excused by ignorance. In the meane while let vs note this that God, as if he had hired them for wages, vsed theyr labour to the setting forth of the glory of Christe: because that when the sepulchre should be found empty, they should haue no colour of lying left them to deny the same. Not that they should stay from their mad vngodlinesse, but this was a full testimonie to all men of a right & sound iudgement, that Christ was risen againe, whose body being laide in the sepulchre was not founde there though the souldiours were set on euery side to watch it.

63. We remember that that deceiuer sayd. This thought was put into them by inspiration from God, not onely that the Lorde might execute a iust reuenge vp on them for their sinne (as he doth oft vex with blinde torments, the mindes which are guilty within them selues) but especially, that he might bridle their filthy tongues. In the meane while we do againe behold how blockish the vngodly are, when sathan hath bewitched them. They doe yet call him a deceiuer, whose diuine power and glory was of late shewed forth by so many myracles. Truly this was not to striue against the cloud, but in deriding the darkenesse of the sunne to spit (if I may so say) against the face of God. By such examples we are taught that we must in season with a godly & modest attentiuenesse consider the glory of God, when it reuealeth it selfe, least that a brutish & horrible blindness should ensue our hardnesse. And though at the first sight this seemeth to bee hard and absurd, that the vngodly shoulde so vily triumph over Christe beinge dead: least this liberty shoulde trouble vs, it is meete alwaies to marke with wisdom, to what purpose, the Lorde, would applye that same. The wicked doe seeme to themselves, to ouerwhelme the whole doctrine

of Christe with his myracles, by this one blasphemie which they doe proudly vomit forth. But God doth vse no other meanes, then by themselves to deliuer his sonne from that finister note of deceit. Therefore, so oft as the wicked shall with their quarrels prepare themselves to peruert all things, and shall giue themselves to speake euill at their pleasure, let vs waite with quiet and patient minds, vntill God shall lay open the light out of darkenesse.

65. *You haue a watch.* Pilate doth declare in these wordes that hee doth refferre it to their owne pleasure, that they may appoynt the souldiours to watch. By the which graunt they were the more tied from deuiling of any cauls, for though they durst not without shame wrangle against christ after his resurrection, yet with Pilates signet they rather shut vp their owne mouth then the sepulchre.

Math. 28.

Marke. 16.

Luke 24

1. Nowe, in the end of the sabboth when the first day of the weeke beganne to dawns, Mary Magdalen & other Mary came to see the sepulchre. 2. And behold there was a great earthquake, for the angel of the Lord descended from heauen, & came & rouled back the stone from y^e dore & sat vpon it. 3. And his countenance was like lightning & his raiment white as snowe. 4. And for feare of him, the keepers were astonied & became as dead men. 5. But the Angell answered & sayd to y^e women Feare yee not for I know y^e seeke Iesus which was crucified. 6. He is not here. for he is risen, as he saide come see the place where y^e lord was laid. 7. And goe quickly, and tell his disciples y^e he is risen from the dead & behold he goeth before you into galilee: there y^e shall see him, loe I tolde you.

1. And when the sabboth day was past, Mary Magdalen & Mary the mother of Iames & Salome, bought sweete oynments that they might come & embalme him. 2. Therefore early in the morning the first day of y^e weeke they came to y^e sepulchre when the sunne was yet rising. 3. And they sayde one to an other: who shall roll vs away the stone from the dore of the sepulchre? 4. And when they looked, they sawe that the stone was rolled away (for it was a very great one) 5. So they went into the sepulchre and sawe a yong man sitting at the right side clothed in a long white robe and they were afraid. 6. But hee saide vnto them Be not afraid yee seeke Iesus of Nazareth, which hath beene crucified: he is not heere behold the place where they put him: 7. But goe your way and tell his disciples & Peter that he will goe before you into Galilee, there shall you see him as he sayd vnto you.

1. Now the first day of the weeke, early in y^e morning they came vnto the sepulchre and brought the odors which they had prepared, & certaine women with th^e. 2. And they found the stone rolled away from the sepulchre. 3. And went in but found not the body of the Lord Iesus. 4. And it came to passe that as they were amazed therat: behold two men sodainly stood by them in shining robes. 5. And as they were afraid and bowed downe their face to the earth they saide to them why seeke yee after him that lieth among the dead. 6. Hee is not heere, but is risen remember howe he spake vnto you when he was yet in Galilee. 7. Saying, that the son of man must be deliuered into the hand of sinfull men and be crucified, and the third day rise againe. 8. And they remembered his wordes.

Nowe wee are come to the poynt of our redemption. For from hence springeth the liuely hope of our reconciliation with GOD, beecaue that Christe came from out of the lower partes of the earth as a conquerour

of death, that he might shew that he hadde the power of the new life in his hand. Wherefore Paule, 1. Cor. 15. 14. doth rightly say, that there is no Gospell, and the hope of saluation is frustrate and vaine, except we beleue that Christ is risen from the dead. For finally, so was righteousness purchased for vs, and an entrance made into heauen: to bee short, our adoption was so confirmed, when Christe shewing the power of his spirite by his resurrection, prooued himselfe to bee the Sonne of God. And though he manifested his resurrection in other order, then our fleshly wisdom would desire: yet this meanes which pleased him, must also seeme best to vs. Hee came out of the graue no man seeing it, that the emptie place might be the first token: next, his will was that the Angels should tell the women that he was aliue: shortly after hee appeared vnto them, and at the length to the Apostles, and that oft times. So by little and little he led his according to their capacity to further knowledge. But that hee first beganne with the women, and not onely shewed himselfe to be seene of them: but also enioyned them to preach the Gospell to his Apostles, that they might be as it were their schoolemistresses. In this was the slouthfulnessie of the Apostles first chastised, who through feare lay almost without life, when as the women hastid busily to the sepulchre, who also were thoroughly rewarded for the same. For though their purpose to annoynt Christ, was not without fault, as if he shuld haue still remained dead, yet hee pardoning their infirmity, bestowed vpon them this singular honour, by resigning to them the office of the Apostleshippe for a while, which was taken from men. And in this maner hee made a shew of that which Paul teacheth, 1. Cor. 1. 27. namely. that he would chuse those things which are foolish and weake in the worlde, that hee might pull downe the pride of flesh. And we shall not bee rightly prepared to learne this article of our fayth, except that wee laying by all pride, doe submit our selues to bee taught of the testimony of women. Not that our faith should bee tied vp in so narrow straites: but because the Lorde, that hee might prooue our obedience, would haue vs become fooles, before he would fully admit vs to the knowledge of his mysteries. As concerning the hystorie, Matthew onely saith that the 2. Maries came to see the sepulchre: Marke adioyning Salome the third, saith that they bought sweete oyntments, that they might annoynt the body, but by Luke it is gathered that there came not onely two or three, but very many. But wee know that this is vsuall amongst holy wryters, of a great number onely to sette downe a few. It is also a probable coniecture, that Mary Magdalen with her other companion (whether shee was sent before, or ran before of her owne accord) came to the sepulchre before the rest. And the wordes of Matthew doe seeme to note this, that they two came to see: For if they should not haue seene, there appeared no meanes how to annoynt Christ.

In the meane while hee concealeth that office which they purposed in their minde to performe: for this one thing was his principall purpose, to speake of the resurrection. Yet it is demaunded howe this labour of the woman, which was mixed with superstition, should please God. But I doubt not, but that their will was to apply this manner of annoynting of the dead receiued of the fathers, that they might in the sorrow of death, seeke for comfort in the hope of the life to come,

I graunt that they offended, because they presently applyed not their minds to that which they had heard spoken before by the mouth of the maister: but because they doe hold the generall principle of the last resurrection, their defecte is pardoned, which had iustly defiled the whole action (as they doe say.) So God oft times of his fatherly goodnes accepteth the doings of his Saints, which should not onely without forgiveness please him, but of right should be reiectd with ignominie and punishment. In this therefore appeared the wonderfull goodnesse of Christ, that he being aliue, kindly and lovingly merite the womā, who wrongfully sought him amongst the dead. If he suffered not them to come to his sepulchre in vaine, it may be certainly determined, that if any manne by faith should now approach vnto him, he should not be deceiued, for the distace of the places shall bee no let, but that the faithfull shall enioy him, who by the power of his spirit filleth both heauen and earth.

M A R. 1 *When the Sabbath day was past.* It is the same in effect which Matthew sayeth. *In the ende of the Sabbath, when the first day of the Sabbath beganne to dawne.* Likewise in Luke. *The first day of the Sabbath.* For sith wee know that the Iewes beganne their day, as soone as the night beganne to waxe darke: the meaning of them is this, that the Sabbath being ended, the women beganne to consult amongst themselves, of going to see the sepulchre, that they might come thither before day in the morning. Two of the Euangelistes doe call that the first day of the Sabbath, which was the firste in order betweene two Sabbaths. Where as others translated it *One*, the ignorance of the Hebrew tongue caused many to erre. For where *and* signifieth sometimes one, sometimes the first, the Euangelists (as in many other places) following the Hebrew phrase, sayd *mian*. But least the ambiguitie should deceiue any, I haue more plainly expounded their meaning. But in the beginning of the sweete odours, the hystory of Luke differeth not a little from Markes wordes: for that they returning into the Cittie shoulde prepare sweete oyntments: then that according to the cōmaundement of the law, they should rest one day before they tooke their iourney. But Marke reporting two diuers things in one, and the same text, had lesse regard to note the distinctiō of the times then Luke. For that which was done before, he mixeth together with the iourney. But in the matter it selfe they doe very wel agree, that they hauing kept the holy rest, they departed out of the house while it was yet darke night, that they might come to the sepulchre, when the day shuld first begin to dawne. But that must be againe remembred which I touched before, that though the rite of annoynting of the dead was common no many prophane nations, yet it was lawfully vsed onely by the Iewes: to whom it hadde beene deliuered by the fathers, that they might exercise themselves in the hope of the resurrectiō: for without this respect it hadde beene a cold and a vaine comfort to embalme a dead corpes without sense: as wee do knowe that the Egyptians very carefully applied themselves this way without any profite. But God by this holy signe represented to the Iewes an image of life euen in death, that they might hope that they shoulde receiue newe strength out of corruption and dust. Further, as the resurrection of Christe, through his liuely odour pierced through all sepulchres, to breath life into the dead: so hee abolished those outward

outward ceremonies. Wherefore he needed no such meanes: but it came of the rudenes and ignorance of the women, who as yet did not well vnderstand that he was free from corruption.

3. *And they sayd amongst themselves.* Onely Marke setteth downe this doubt: but sith the others doe report, that the stone was rolled away by the Angell, it is easily gathered that they remained perplexed and doubtfull in counsel, vntill a way was opened by the had of God. But hereby we do learne, that they were so caried away in their zeale, that they came thither without consulting of it before. They had seene a stone layd vpon the sepulchre, to keepe men from entering into the same: why thought they not of it at leisure in the house, but because they were so astonied with feare and admiration, that reason and memory failed them? But because that they were blinded with a holy zeale, God doeth not impute this fault vnto them.

MAT. H. 2. *And behold there was a great earthquake.* The Lord reuealed the presence of his glory by many signes: that hee might the better frame the heartes of the holy women to reuerence. For sith it was a matter of no small moment, to know that the Sonne of God had gotten victory ouer death (where in the summe of our saluation consisted) it was meete for the taking away of all doubts, that the maiestie of God should openly and plainly offer it selfe to bee seene of them. Mathewe therefore sayeth that *there was an earthquake*. Wherein the sense might discerne the celestiall power which I spake of. And it was meete that the womanne should bee wakened by this wonder, that they might nowe thinke vpon no humane or earthly thing, but lift vp their mindes to a worke of God, newe and vnlooked for. The brightnesse of the Godhead shewed it selfe also in the apparell and forme of the Angell, as it were by beames: that they might perceiue that he was no mortall man, who stood by in the shape of a man. For though the brightnes of the light, or the whitenesse of snow, are no thing to the great glory of God, for no colour must be imagined if we desire to know him rightly: yet by outward notes he declaring that hee is neare, doeth according to the capacite of our infirmitie, call vs to himselfe: this must bee knownen, that hee onely offereth vnto vs the visible signes of his presence, that our mindes might apprehend him inuisible: vnder corporall shapen there is giuen a tast to vs of his spirituall essence, that wee might spirituallly seeke the same. Yet no doubt, but with the outward signes there was ioyned some inward efficacie, which might graue in the heartes of the womanne, a feeling of the Godhead. For though they were amazed at the first, yet it appeareth by the next, that by degrees they came to themselues, so as they were taught to feele the hand of God present. But while our three Euangelistes doe eudcouour to be short they doe passe ouer that whiche Iohn doeth set forth more at large in the 20. chapter, vnto the 12. verse, which we know to be no vnusuall matter amongst them. There is also this diuersitie, that where Mathewe and Marke doe make mention onely of one Angel, Iohn and Luke doe put two. But this shew also of repugnancie is easily answered: for we doe knowe that the figure Synecdoche, is often vsed in the scriptures. There were therefore two Angells seene first to Mary, and after to her other fellowes.

But because the one, who had the office to speake, especially tourned their mindes to him, it was sufficient for Mathewe and Marke to report his message. Further, where Mathewe sayeth that the *Angel sate vpon the stone*, he doeth in wordes sette that before, which should bee after: or at the least neglecteth the course of the hystorie: for the Angell appeared not presently, but when as the nouelty and strangenes of the matter had held the women in suspence & doubt.

4. *And for feare of him the keepers were astonied.* The Lord terrified the keepers, as if hee should set a hot iron in their consciences, whiche might compell them to feele his diuine power against their will: at the least the terrour auailed thus farre, that they should not carelessly scorne at those thinges which shoulde presently be dispeared abroade of his resurrection. For though they were not ashamed to set their tongues to sale, yet they are compelled, will they, nill they, inwardly to acknowledge that which before menne they did wickedly denie. And it is not to bee doubted, but where they had free liberty to speake, they familiarly confessed amongst their acquaintance, that they durst not speake openly because they were hired with money. And here is to be noted the difference betwene the two kindes of feare, which Mathewe doeth compare together. The soldiours accustomed to tumultes, were terrified, and so swallowed vp of feare, that they fell downe as if they were halfe dead, but no power raised them, so fallen prostrate. The women were likewise afraide, but they presently receiued comfort, which restored their mindes almost failing them, that at the least they began to haue a better hope. And certainly it is meete that the maiestie of God should strike such a horreur and feare as well in the godly as in the reprobate, that all flesh might bee silent in his presence. But when the Lorde hath humbled and brought his elect into obedience, hee presently mitigateth their feare, lest they shoulde so lie ouerwhelmed: and not so onely, but with the sweetnesse of his grace, he healeth the wound they haue receiued: but hee leaueth the reprobate as without life with a feare which doth distract them, or hee suffereth them to pine away with many flower ommentes. For concerning these soldiours, they were like to deade menne, but they lay afraide as menne distracted of their mindes without any earnest affection, yet withall they forgoate that they were afraide: not that the remembrance of the feare shoulde bee altogether blotted out: but because the liuely and effectuall feeling power of God, fled from them, whereunto they were compelled to giue place. But this must especially bee noted, sith they feared like as the women, they had no comfort giuen them, which might take away their feare. For the Angelles sayd onely to the women, *feare yee not*: he proposed vnto them the resurrection of Christ, as the matter of their ioy and comfort. In Luke there is added a reproofe, because *they sought the liuing with the dead*. as the Angel should stirre them vp, lest they should fall further into desperation.

7. *And goe quickly, and tell his disciples.* God doth heere adorne the women with an extraordinarie honour, in that hee commaunded them to instruct his Apostles in the principall poynt of our saluation. In Marke they are commaunded by name to beare this message to Peter, not because he excelled them in dignity, but because his fall was so vile, that hee hadde neede of speciall comfort, that hee might knowe that Christe hadde not cast him off, though

though he had filthily and wickedly fallen. Now, he had beene in the sepulchres and had seene the tokens of the resurrection of Christ: but GOD denied him that honour which he shortly after bestowed vpon the women, as to heare the Angell say that Christ was risen. And certesse hereby it appeareth how blockish he as yet remained, in that he doth fearfully run againe into his lurking corners, as if hee had seene nothing: when as Mary sate weeping by the sepulchre. Wherefore it is not to be doubted but that shee and her fellowes in beholding the Angell, receiued the reward of their patient waiting. That the Angell sendeth the disciples into Galile, I thinke was done for this cause, that Christ might shew himselfe to many. For we know that he had beene long conuerfant in Galile, and his will was to giue his disciples a larger space, that they might in that iourney gather their mindes somewhat to them. Then the knowledge which they had of the places, holpe them, that they might the more certainly know the master. For it behoued that they should be by al meanes confirmed, least any thing should be wanting for the assurance offaith. *Loe, I haue told you.* By this phrase offpeach the Angell confirmeth that to be true, which he spake. And he would not speake this of himselfe, as if he had bin the first authour, but he subscribeth to Christs promise: and there in Marke he onely bringeth them in mind of the wordes of Christ. Luke doth prosecute the speach further, as that the disciples should be admonished by Christ, that it behoued him to be crucified, &c. yet the sense is the same, because he had foretold his death together with his resurrection. It is also added & they then remembered the words of the Lord: where-by wee are taught, that though they had profited badly in the doctrine of Christ yet it perished not, but was couered, vntill that in due season it should bud forth and spring.

Matth. 28.

Marke. 16.

Luke. 24.

8. So they departed quickly from the sepulchre with feare and great ioye, and did run to bring his disciples wordes.

9. And as they went to tell his disciples be hold: Iesus also mette them saying God saue you and they came and tooke him by the feete, and worshipped him.

10. Then sayde Iesus vnto them bee not afraid Goe and tell my brethren that they go into Galile and there they shall see mee.

8. So they departed quickly. The 3. Euangelists do omit that which Iohn doth report of Mary Magdalene: namely, that shee hauing not yet seene the Angels returned into the city, and weeping, she complained that the body of Christ was

8. And they went out quickly, and fled from the sepulchre for they trembled and were amased, neither saide they any thinge to any man for they were afraide.

9. And when Iesus was risen againe in the morrow (which was the first day of weeke) hee appeared first to Mary Magdalen, out of whom he had cast seven deuils,

10. And shee went & tolde them that had bin with him which mourned and weeped.

11. And when they heard she was alide, & had appeared to her, they beleueed it not.

9. And returned from the sepulchre, and told all these things vnto the eleuen, and to all the remnant.

10. Nowe it was Mary Magdalene and Ioanna, and Mary the mother of Iames, and other women with them, whiche tolde these thinges vnto the apostles.

11. But their words seemed vnto them as a fained thing, neither beleeked they them.

12. Then arose Peter and ran vnto the sepulchre, & looked in, & saw the linnen cloathes laide by them selues, and departed wondering in himselfe at that which was come to passe

taken away. Heere is not onely mention made of the second retourne into the citie, when shee and her other fellowes, caried newes to the disciples that Christ was risen: whiche they had learned as well by the voyce and testimonie of the Angell, as by seeing of Christ himselfe. Also, beefore Christe shewed himselfe, they nowe ranne towards the disciples, as they were commaunded by the Angell. In the iourney befell the second confirmation, that they might the more boldly affirme that the Lorde was risen. Mathewe sayeth. *that they went with feare and great ioy.* By which wordes he meaneth that they were comforted by the voyce of the Angell, yet withall, that they were stricken with feare, so that they were tosed in perplexitie betweene ioy and doubtfullnes. For so the hartes of the godly are sometime possessed with contrary affections which are conuersant in the same by courses, vntill at the length the peace of the spirit doth bring the same into a quiet estate. For if their faith had bene periecte, it had thoroughly quieted them by putting feare to flight: nowe, the feare being mixed with ioy, doth declare that they as yet trusted not thoroughly to the testimonie of the Angell. And heere Christe gaue a notable testimony of his mercy, in that hee meeteth them which are so doubtfull and fearefull, that he might take away that doubtfullnes which remained. Yet Markes wordes doe not a little differ, in that *they fledde for feare and amasednesse.* so that for feare they should be astonied. But it is not so hard to answer, for when their mindes was to obey the Angell, yet their abilitie serued not, if the Lord had not loosed their silence. But there is a greater shewe of repugnancie in that whiche followeth. For Marke doeth not say that they meete Christe by the way, but onely that he appeared early in the morning to Magdalene: Luke maketh no mention of this vision at all. But sith this pretermiission is not a thing vnusuall to the Euangelists, it must not seeme absurde to vs. As concerning the difference betweene the wordes of Mathewe and Marke, it may be that Magdalene was partaker of so great good before the rest: or else by Synecdoche Mathewe doeth extend that to all, which was proper to one. Yet it is more probable that Marke nameth her onely, beecause that shee before others enjoyed the sight of Christe first, and that in a pecular maner. But her fellowes also sawe Christe in their order: and therefore Mathewe doeth attribute this generally to them all. And this was a woonderfull token of goodnesse, that Christ reuealed his heauenly glory to a miserable woman, which had bene possessed of seuen deuilles: and when hee would sette forth the light of the newe and eternall life, he began there where there was nothing in the iudgemēt of man but contempt and shāe. But by this lesō Christ declareth, when hee once sheweth his fauour towards vs, howe liberally hee vseth to prosecute the course of the same: and with all he casteth downe all pride of the flesh.

9. *They tooke him by the feete.* This seemeth not to agree with the wordes of I O H N, where hee declareth that Mary was forbidden to touche Christe. But it may bee easily reconciled, beecause the Lorde seeing Mary too much bent to the embracing and kissing of his feete, shoulde commaund her to departe, beecause the superstition was to bee reprooued, and hee was to shewe the ende of the resurrection, from the whiche Marye was drawne partly by an earthly and grosse affection, partly by a fonde zeale. But the

Lorde

Lord suffered her to touch his feete at the first meeting, that there might be nothing wanting for the assurance of them. Therefore presently after doeth Matthew adde, that they worshiped the Lord: the which was a signe of no doubtfull knowledge.

10. *Then Iesus said vnto them* We do gather that this was a corrupt feare, from the which Christ doth againe deliuer them. For though it arose of their wondering at the matter, yet it was contrary to a settled assurance. Therefore to the end they might lift vp themselves to Christe the conquerour of death, they are commaunded to be of good comfort. But wee are taught by the same wordes, that we do then know rightly the resurrection of the Lord, if by the faith which we haue conceiued, we dare glory, that we are made partakers of the same life. And thus farre must our faith profite, least feare preuaile. Further, Christ commanding that this should be tolde to his disciples, doeth by this message gather his Church disperfed together againe, & erect the same now falne. For as the faith of the resurrection doth especially giue vs life at this day, so it behoued that the disciples should haue that life restored to them, from the which they had falne. Here also is to be noted the incredible kindnes of Christ, in that he vouchsafeth to call those runagates, who had most cowardly forsaken him by the name of brethren. And it is not to be doubted, but that by calling them so louingly, his will was freely to appease that sorrow, wherewith he knew that they were grievously tormented. But because that hee accounteth not the Apostles only as his brethren, let vs know that Christ commaunded that this message should so be done, that it might then remaine for vs. Wherefore we must not coldly harken to the history of the resurrection, sith that Christ by the band of brotherly kindred, doth with his owne mouth louingly call vs to receiue the fruit of the same. Where some interpreters vnder the name of brethren, doe vnderstand Christes kinsmen, the text doth very sufficiently confute their errour: for Iohn doth expressly declare that *Mary came to the disciples*: & presently it followeth in Luke, *the women came to the Apostles*. Marke also agreeth with the, wryting that *Mary came and told these thinges to the disciples, which wept*.

MAR. 11. *And when they heard.* Marke onely maketh mention of the testimony of Mary alone. Yet I am perswaded that the commaundementes of Christe were done generally by them all: and this place doth the better confirme that which I sayde euen nowe, that there is no repugnancie betweene the Euangelistes, while one doeth particularly assigne that to Mary Magdalen, which according to others, was common to all, though not in like degree. But the disciples were growne to bee meruailous sluggish, that they remembered not that that was fulfilled, which they hadde ofte times heard of the maister. If the women had tolde any thing, which before had not beene heard of, there hadde beene good cause why in a matter incredible, there had beene no credite giuen to their reporte: but nowe they must needes be exceeding blockish, who doe account for a fable or a dreame, a matter so oft promised and witnessed by the sonne of God, when it is reported to be fulfilled by them which had seene the same. Further, sith that they were deprived of a right vnderstanding through their owne vnbeleife, they doe not onely refuse the light of the truth, but they doe reiect it as a fantasie, as Luke declareth. Hereby it appea-

reth that they so yelded to the temptation, that almost all the taste of Christes wordes was cleane forgotten.

L V. 12. *Then arose Peter.* I doe not thinke but that Luke hath here inuer-
ted the order of the hystoric, as it is easie to gather by the wordes of Iohn : and
in my iudgement it is not amisse, that the woorde *Running*, be resolued into the
preterpluperfect tence. And they which are but meanely exercised in the scrip-
ture, doe know that this is vsuall amongst the Hebrewes, to report afterwarde
those things, which were omitted in their place. But Luke by this circumstance
doth the more exaggerate the hardnesse of the Apostles, in that they despised
the womens wordes : when yet Peter had now seene the sepulchre empty, & by
a manifest signe of the resurrection was driuen into admiration.

Matthew 28.

Marke.

Luke.

11. *Now, when they were gone, behold, some of the
watch came into the cittie, and shewed vnto the hie
Priests, all things that were done.*

12. *And they gathered them together with the
Elders, and tooke counsel, and gaue large money vn-
to the souldiour.*

13. *Saying, say his disciples came by night, and
stole him away while we slept.*

14. *And if the gouernour heare of this, wee will
perswade him, and saue you harmelesse.*

15. *So they tooke the money and did as they were
taught : and this sayinge is noised among the Iewes
vnto this day.*

11. *Now when they were gone.* It is not only to be supposed, but the matter it selfe
declareth, that the souldiours to whome the keeping of the sepulchre was com-
mitted, were so corrupted by rewarde, that they were ready to lie at the Priests
appointment. They knew very well, that the Priests feared nothing more, then
that it should bee reported that Christ rose againe the third day after his death :
they knewe that they were sent thither for that purpose, that by keeping the
corpes, they might put away that report. The men therfore being giuen to gaine,
yea, & seeking gaine euery way, after they had lost their labour this way, they
do deuise a new meanes to get money. But where Mathew saith that *some of the
watch came*, it is vncertaine whether a few subtille fellowes of them went alone to
counsel frō the rest, or whether they were sent in the general name of them all.
The second part by coniecture seemeth rather to bee true : for Matthew doeth
afterwardes say that the reward of periurie was giuen not to one or two, but ge-
nerally to the souldiours. It is certaine that where all of them, or but a parte of
thē conspired, yet they sought to gaine by the cruell & vnappeaseable hatred of
the priests against Christ. Further, sith they had thē guilty of the offence, they a-
bused their euill conscience, for to wrest mony frō them. For (as almost all wic-
ked menne doe) the priestes knowing their owne lewdnesse, to the ende they
might couer their shame, are compelled to corrupt the souldiours with a large
reward

rewarde. Also it doth heereby appeare, that after the reprobate haue once cast themselves headlong into sinne, they are then caught in newe sinnes, & while they would defend their name before men, they doe carelessly neglect their sins against God. These wretches doe not onely hire the soldiours, with rewarding them: but also, if the offence should bee brought into iudgement, they doe cast their name and life in daunger. And what compelleth them besides the losse of the money to come into great perill, but because their obstinate fury suffereth them not to goe backe, vntill they should heape sinnes vpon sinnes?

15. *And this saying is noysed.* This was the greatest worke of Gods vengeance for the blinding of the Iewes, that the resurrection of Christ was buried in the periurie of the soldiours, and that so vaine a lie should be receiued. And heereby it appeareth that they which did not thinke that Christ was risen, were deceived in a voluntary error, as the worlde doeth willingly offer it selfe to be deceived with the sleights of sathan. For there had bene no neede of any long search, if any man should but haue opened his eyes. The armed soldiours doe say that the body of Christ was stolen from them by a weake, fearefull, small, and vnarmed company of men. What shewe of colour? They doe adde that this was done while they were asleepe. Howe then doe they imagine that it was stolne? If there had bene any suspicion of the disciples, why followed they not after them? Why made they no stirre? This therefore was but a childish shift, which they had not escaped with, without punishment, if the matter had come before a righteous and a stout gouernour. But through Pilates winking it came to passe, that so great wickednesse escaped. As we doe see it doeth sal out daily, that prophane iudges haue but small regarde, where truth is ouerwhelmed by deceit and malice: but rather, if they doe feare no incommodity, they do seeme to ioyne in lewdnesse together with the treacherous varlets. And though this may seeme to be hard, that God should suffer this false rumour to bee spred for the extinguishing of the glory of his sonne, yet to his iust vengeance that honour must be giuen which is due. For that nation was worthy that the cloudes should take the light from them, as wee doe perceiue by this, that a vaine and friuolous lie, should be so greedily snatched vpe: Further, sith that almost all had stumbled at the stone of offence, it was meete that their eyes should be darkened, least they should see that the cup of giddines was giuen them to drinke of: To be short, they were cast into all kinde of madnesse, as it was spoken of before in the prophesie of I say, the ninthe chapter, and the tenth verse. GOD would neuer haue suffered them to be deceived by so sonde credulitie, but that he might deprive them of the hope of saluation, who had condemned the redeemer, euen as with the same kinde of punishment hee doth now chaunce the worlde, loosing the raynes to the reprobate, that they may growe worse. But though this lie shoulde preuaile amongst the Iewes, yet it was no let, but that the trueth of the Gospell shoulde haue free passage, euen to the endes of the earth, as it alwayes went, as conquerour ouer all the leites of the worlde.

Mathew.

Marke 16.

Luke 24.

12. After that he appeared vnto two of them in another fourme as they walked and went into the country.

13. And behold, two of them went that same day to a towne which was from Hierusalem about three score furlongs, called Emaus.

14. And they talked together of all these things that were done.

15. And it came to passe, as they communed together and reasoned, that Iesus himself drew neare, and went with them. 16. But their eyes were holden, that they could not knowe him. 17. Hee sayd vnto them: What maner of communications are these that yee haue one to another as ye walke and are sad. 18. And the one (named Cleopas) answered and sayd vnto him: Art thou onely a stranger in Ierusalem, and haste not knowne the thinges which are come to passe there in these dayes?

19. And he saide vnto them what thinges? And they saide vnto him, Of Iesus of Nazaret, which was a Prophet, mighty in deede and in worde before God and all the people. 20. And howe the hie Priestes and our rulers deliuered him to bee condemned to death and haue crucified him. 21. But wee trusted that it had been hee that should haue deliuered Israel, and astouchinge all these thinges, to day is the thirde day that they were donne. 22. Yea, and certaine women amonge vs made vs astonied, whiche came early vnto the sepulchre. 23. And when they founde not his bodie, they came, sayinge: that they had also seene a vision of angels whiche sayde that hee was alive.

24. Therefore certaine of them which were with vs, went to the sepulchre, and founde it euen so, as the women had saide, but him they sawe not. 25. Then he sayde vnto them, O fooles and slowe of heart, to beleene all that the Prophetes haue spoken. 26. Ought not Christe to haue suffred these thinges, and to enter into his glorie? 27. And hee begane at Moses, and at all the Prophetes, and interpreted vnto them in all the scriptures, the thinges whiche were wrtten of him.

28. And they drew neare vnto the towne which they went to, but hee made as though hee would haue gone further. 29. But they constrained him, sayinge: Abide with vs, for it is towardes nighte, and the day is farre spent. So hee went into tarye with them.

30. And it came to passe, as hee sat at the table with them, hee tooke the bread, and gaue shankes, and brake it and gaue it to them.

31. And

13. *And behold two of of them.* Though Marke doth onely touch this hystoric briefly, and Mathew and Iohn doe say neuer a word of it: yet because it is profitable to be knowne and worthy to be remembred, it is not in vaine that Luke doth so dilligently describe the same. But I haue already oft times declared, that the spirit of God hath so aptly directed the workes of euery of the Euangelistes, that what could not be found in one or two, might be had in the others. For diuers visions, whereof Iohn doth make mention, are not spoken of by our three. Further, before I will come to the seuerall circumstances, this shall bee woorth the labour summarily to bee noted, that these two witnessers were chosen, not that the Lords purpose was by them to shew the Apostles that he was risen, but to reprove their slacknes. Yet though they preuailed nothing at the first, afterward their testimony being furthered by other helpes, it was had in due regard amongst them. But it is doubted who they were: but that by the name of one of them (whome Luke a little after calleth Cleophas) it may be gathered that they were not of the eleauen. Emaus was an auncient towne and of no smal account, which the Romans afterwarde called Nicopolis: Neither was it fare distant from Ierusalem, when as three score furlongs do only make seven thousand foure hundred paces. But Luke hath not so much regarded to note the place in respect of the renowne of it, as for the certainty of the hystoric.

14. *And they talked together.* This was a signe of godlinesse, that they endeououred to nourish by what meane they might, their fayth in Christe, though it was but weake and small. For their talke tended not to any other purpose, then that they might oppose the reuerence of their maister as a shield or buckler against the offence of the crosse. And though by inquiring and disputing they bewrayed their ignorance worthy to be reprehended, when as they being before admonished that Christ shoulde rise againe, that they should bee amazed at the hearing of the same: yet their aptnes to be taught yelded a way to christ to take away their errour. For many of sette purpose doe moue questions, because they are determined frowardly to refuse the truth, but they which haue a desire, quickly to imbrace the truth, though they sticke at small obiections, & stay at light scruples, yet their godly endeour to obey, procureth them fauour before God, so that as it were with stretched our hand, beeing ledde into a perfecte assurance, shoulde cease to wauer. And this is to be noted, where we doe enquire for Christe, if it bee done with a modest desire to learne, there is a way opened for the furtherance of vs: yea, wee doe then procure him to be as a teacher, euen as prophane men with their filthy speeches doe driue him far away.

16. *Their eyes were holden.* The Euangelistes do expressly set this downe, least any man should thinke that the shape of Christes body were altered. Therefore though christ remained like as he was, yet he was vnknowne, because their eyes were holden: whereby the suspicion of a Ghost, or of a false imagination is taken away. And hereby we are taught, how weake we are in all our senses, so that neither the eyes nor the eares doe their office, further then that they haue power ministred vnto them daily from heauen. Our members are naturally furnished with their gifts: but that it might the better appeare that they are giuened to vs freely, God keepeth the vse of them in his owne hand: that this

same.

same with the eares to heare, and the eyes doe see, shoulde bee layd vp amongst his daily benefits: for if that hee shoulde not continually strengthen our senses, their whole force would presently fade away. I doe graunt that our senses are not oft holden, as it then befell, that they shoulde bee so grossly deceiued in a forme objected before them: yet God by one example, sheweth that it is in his power to direct whatsoeuer powers he bestoweth vpon man, that we may know that nature is subiecte to his pleasure. Now, if the corporall eyes, whose chiefe property it is to see, are so oft as it pleaseth the Lorde, so holden, that they cannot discern those things which are set before them, our mindes should bee no better, though they remained in their integrity. But now in this miserable corruption, since their light is taken from them, they are subiect to be deceiued many wayes, and so oppressed with a grosse dulnesse, that they can doe nothing but erre, as also it doth befall very oft. Therefore it commeth not of the sharpnesse of our witte for vs to discern betweene truth and falshood, but of the spirite of wisdom: but their chiefe dulnes appeareth in the beholding of heavenly things: for we doe not onely conceiue false shapen for those things which are true, but we doe turne the cleare light into darkenesse.

17. *What manner of communication are these yee haue one to another?* That which we doe see, was done then openly by Christe, we doe daily finde to be performed in vs in a secret maner, that of his owne accord he insinuateth himselfe to teach vs. But that which I syde euen now, doeth more euidently appeare by the answer of Cleophas: that is, though they were doubtfull and in perplexity about the resurrection of Christe, yet they esteemed reuerently of his doctrine, so as they were not bent to fall away. For they do not tarry vntill that Christ by manifesting himselfe, should preuent them, or that the traualer who soeuer hee was, shoulde speake honourably of him, but rather out of a small and darkish light, Cleophas doeth cast such sparkes into the straunger, as might somewhat lighten his minde if he had beene rude and ignorant. The name of Christ was at that time so odious and infamous in euery place, that it was not safe to speake honourably of Christ: but without regard of enuy, he nameth him the Prophet of God, and professeth himselfe to be one of his disciples.

And though this title of prophet is far inferiour to the diuine maiesty of christ, yet this small commendation deserueth prayse, sith Cleophas had no other purpose, then to procure disciples to Christ, which should submit themselves to his Gospell. But it is vncertaine whether Cleophas according to his rudenesse spake more basely of Christ then was meete: Or whether his purpose was to beginne at the rudiments which were best knowne, that he might by degrees goe further. And certainly a litle after, he doth not simply account Christ in the common order of Prophets, but he sayeth that he and others supposed that he should haue beene the redeemer.

16. *Mighty in deede and in woorde.* The same forme of woordes almost doeth Luke, Actes 7. 22. vse in the person of Stephen, where speaking in the prayse of Moses, hee sayeth that hee was mighty in woordes and deedes. But in this place it is doubted whether Christe shoulde bee called *Mighty in deede*. in respect of his myracles as if it hadde beene sayde that hee was
endu-

endued with diuine vertues, which should proue that he was sent from heauen) or whether that it would reach further, that the meaning should be, that he excelled as well in the facultie of teaching, as in holinesse of life, and excellent gifts. And I doe like this latter sense. Neither is that addition in vaine, *Before God and the people*, which signifieth that the excellencie of Christ was so declared to men, & knowen by euident trialles that it was without all fained ostentation. And heereby may be gathered a brieue definition of a true Prophet: namely, hee who to his woordes adioyneth also the power of workes, and shall not onely endeavour to excell amongst men, but to behaue himself sincerely, as in the sight of God.

21. *But wee trusted.* It shall appeare by the text, that the hope which they had conceiued of Christ, was taken away though by the woordes it should so seeme at the first sight. But because the historie which is sette downe of the condemning of Christe might with draw a man, who had no tast of the gospel because that he was condemned by the Prelates of the Church: Cleopas opposeth the hope of the redemption against this offence. And though he doth afterwarde declare that hee himselfe doth fearefully and as a staggering man remaine in this hope, yet he doth diligently gather what helps soeuer he can, for the vpholding of the same. For it is probable that he spake of the third day for no other end, but because the Lord had promised that he would rise againe the third day. Furthermore, that whiche hee reporteth that the woman founde not the body, and that a vision of Angels appeared to them, and beecause that which the women had spoken of the empty graue was also approued by the testimony of men, is referred to this summe, that Christe was risen. So the godly manne doubtfull betweene faith and feare, nourisheth his faith, and according to his strength, striueth against feare.

25. *And he sayd vnto them.* This reproofe seemeth to bee sharper and harder then was meete in respect of the weake man: but who so shall consider of all the circumstances, shall easily perceiue that it was not without cause that the Lord gaue so sharpe a reproofe to them, amongst whome hee had bestowed his long labour, so ill and almost without any fruite. For it is to be noted that this heere spoken is not onely to be restrayned to these two: but obiected as a common fault, which their other fellowes might presently heare of their mouthes. Christ had so oft forwarned them of his death, he had also so oft taught of the new and spirituall life, and had confirmed his doctrine by the oracles of Prophets: as if he had spoken to deafe men, or to blocks or stones, they being once stricken with the horreur of death, doe turne themselves hether and thither. Therefore he doth iustly attribute this slackering to foolishnesse, and hee maketh slouth the cause of the same, because they were no readier to beleue. And he doth not onely vpbraide them, that when he was a most excellent maister to them, they were but slacke and slow to learne: but beecause they were not attentive to the sayings of the Prophets: as if he should haue sayd that their slouthfulnesse coule not bee excused, because there was no fault, but onely in themselves, sith the doctrine of the Prophets was so euident and plaine of it selfe, and so well expounded to them.

As the most part of men doe beare the same blame for their owne folly, because they are vnapt to be taught, and obstinat. But let vs note that when Christ saw his disciples to be too slouthfull, to the ende that he might waken them, he beginneth at reproofing them. For so must they be dealt with, whom wee haue tried to be either dull or slouthfull,

26. *Ought not Christ to haue suffered these things.* It is not to bee doubted but that Christ spake of the office of the Mesiās, as it was described by the prophets least the death of the crosse should be offensive: and in iourning three or foure houres, hee had space sufficient fully to set forth the matters. Therefore Christ doth not say in three wordes that he ought to suffer: but hee declareth at large that he was sent to that end, that by the sacrifice of death hee might wash away the sinnes of the world, that hee might by the purging sacrifice offered for the taking away of the curse, that hee might washe the sinnes of others from their guiltines. Luke therefore for the more vehemencie setteth downe this sentence interrogatiuely, whereby it is gathered that hee shewed by reasons the necessitie of his death. The summe is, that the disciples did euill to be troubled at the death of their maister, (without the which he could not performe the partes of Christ: for the cheife point of our redemption, was his offering vp) for by this meanes they shut vp the gate against him, least he shuld come into his kingdome. The which must be noted diligently: for sith Christ should want his honour, if he should not be accounted a sacrifice for sinnes, his onely way into his glory, is that his humbling to bee of no reputation, Phil. 2. 7. out of the which he arose a redeemer. But we doe see at this day, how amongst vs they do sinne nothing sooner then in a preposterous order. For amongst the multitude of them which doe royally declare Christ to bee a king, and doe extoll him with diuine praises, scarce euery tenth of them doth thinke that wee haue gotten grace by his death.

27. *And hee began at Moses.* This place doth teach how Christ is made manifest vnto vs by the Gospell: namely, while the knowledge of him is prooued plainly out of the lawe and the Prophets. For no man euer was a more readie and apte teacher of the Gospell, then the Lord himse'fe, who as wee see fetched the prooue of this doctrine out of the lawe and the Prophetes. If any man will except, that he began at the rudimentes, that the disciples by a litle at once, bidding the Prophets farewell, might passe ouer to the perfect Gospell, this deuise is easily confuted, for afterward it shall be sayd, that all the Apostles had their minde opened, not that they should be wise without the helpe of the lawe, but that they might vnderstand the Scriptures. Wherefore to the end y^e Christ may at this day be reuealed vnto vs by the Gospell, it is necessary that Moses and the Prophets shuld come forth before as forerunners. Whereof the readers are therefore to be admonished, least they should giue eare to fanaticall men, which by suppressing the law and the Prophetes, doe wickedly maime the Gospell. As if that God would haue to bee vnprofitable, whatsoeuer he at any time spake of his owne Sonne. But in what maner they are to bee applyed to Christ, which are euery where read of him in the lawe and the Prophetes, it is not my present purpose to declare.

It is sufficient, briefly to note, that Christe is not in vaine called the ende
of

of the law. For though that Moses rather shadowed him forth darkely, and a farre off, then expresse him plainly: yet this is without controuersie, that if in the stocke of Abraham, there should not be one head aboue all, vnder whom the people should grow into one body, the couenant which GOD made with the holy fathers, should be broken and but in vaine. Further, when as God had commanded that the Tabernacle and the ceremonies, should be framed after the heauenly paterne, it followeth that the sacrifices and all the rites of the temple, if they had not their truth else where, should be as a vaine and fruitelesse play. And this argument doth the Apostle handle in many words, in the Epistle to the Hebrewes. For holding that principle, that the visible ceremonies of the law were shadowes of spirituall things, he teacheth that Christ is to bee sought in the whole priesthood of the law, in the sacrifices and in the forme of the Sanctuary. *Bucer* also other where doth wisely diuine, that in that obscuritie there was a certaine kinde of interpreting the Scripture in vse amongst the Iewes, which the fathers deliuered vnto them by hand. But I, least that I should follow vncertainties, am contented with that naturall and simple maner, which is euery where to be found amongst the Prophets, who were the most apt interpreters of the law.

Christ therefore is rightly collected out of the law, if wee consider that the couenant which Christ made with the fathers, was made by the helpe of a Mediator: The Sanctuary wherein GOD testified the presence of his grace, was consecrated with blood: The lawe it selfe with their promites, was confirmed with the sprinkeling of blood: One priest was chosen out of all the people, who should present himselfe in the name of them all, in the sight of God, not as any mortall man, but in a holy habit: men had there no hope of their reconciliation with God, but by offering vp of a sacrifice. Furthermore, very notable is that prophesie of the perpetuities of the kingdome in the tribe of Iuda. But the Prophets themselues (as wee haue declared) haue more plainly described the Mediator, yet they themselues had their first knowledge from Moses: for they had no other office inioyned them, but that they should renew the memorie of the couenant, more plainly shew the spirituall worship of God, establish the hope of saluation in the Mediatour: and also, that they might the more evidently declare, the meane of the reconciliation. But because it pleased God to deferre the full reuelation vnto the comming of his Sonne, it was not a superfluous interpretation

28. *And they drew neare vnto the towne.* There is no reason why some interpreters should imagine any other place then Emaus. For the iourney was not so long, that they should rest in a nearer lodging. We know that seuen miles (though a man for the recreation of his mind should walke but softly) are gone at the most in foure houres. Therefore I doubt not but that Christe went forward euen to Emaus. Now, where it is demaunded whether hee could dissemble, who is the eternall truth of God: I doe answere that the Sonne of God was not bound by this law, that hee should make all his counsels knowne. Yet because that simulation is a kinde of lying, the knotte is not yet vnloosed: especially, sith that very many doe drawe this example to a libertie for lying. But I doe answere, Christe without lying fained as it is heere sayd in like man-

ner as hee shewed himselfe to be a trauailer: for the reason of them both is like *Augustines* answere is somewhat more subtile, *lib. 2. ad Consentium, cap. 13.* Also in his booke of questions vpon the Gospels, chap. 51. For hee would haue this faining accounted amongst the Tropes and Figures, then, amongst the Parabables and Morall hylories. But this one thing doth satisfie mee, as Christe for a time couered the eyes of them with whom hee spake, that hee shewing himselfe as in the person of a stranger, they might account him as a common guest: so the purpose of going further, which for that time he pretended, was not a faining of an other matter then that which in deede hee was about to doe, but because that hee wou'de not discouer the maner of his departure: for no man will denie but that hee was then to goe further, for hee was then seperated from the company of men. So hee deceiued not his disciples by this faining, but held them somewhile in suspence, vntill the full time of his manifestation were come. Wherefore they doe deale too preposterously, who make him to bee their patron for lying, and by his example wee haue no more colour to dissemble in anything, then to imitate his diuine power in closing the eyes of the which see. Wherefore there is no safer way, then to holde the prescript rule of speaking truly and simply. Not that the Lord at any time disobeyed his fathers lawe, but hee without binding himselfe to the literall priest performed the simple meaning of the lawe, and the weakenesse of our senses doe neede an other bridle.

30. Hee tooke bread. *Augustine*, and diuers others with him, thought that Christ took not the bread which he reached as to be an ordinarie bread to bee eaten, but for an holy signe of his body. And this is plausible to be spoken, that the Lord should beethen knowne in the spirituall glasse of the supper: for the disciples looking vpon him with corporall eyes, knewe him not. But because this coniecture hath no probable token for the prooofe of it, I doe rather take *Lukes* wordes more simply, that Christ taking bread in his hands, after his maner hee gaue thanks. And it appeareth that he vsed a speciall order of prayer, to the which he knew that his disciples had bene familiarly accustomed, that they by this note being admonished, might stirre vp their senses. In the meane season let vs learne by the maisters example, so oft as wee doe eate breade, to giue thanks to him who is the authour of life, for that putteth a difference betweene vs and prophane men.

Mathew, Marke. 16

Luke. 24.

13. And they went and tolde it to the remnant, but they beleened them not.

14. Finally hee appeared vnto the eleuen as they sate together and re-
proued them

of

31. Then their eyes were opened, and they knew him but how was taken out of their sight.

32. And they saide betweene themselves: Did not our heartes burne with in vs while hee talked with vs by the waye, and when hee opened to vs the Scriptures?

33. And they rose vp the same houre, and returned to Hierusalem, and founde the eleuen gathered together and them that were with them.

34. Which sayde: the Lord is risen in deede, and hath appeared to Symon.

35. Then they tolde what thinges were done in the way.

way.

of their vnbe-
liefe & hard-
nesse of harte,
because they
beleueed not
them whiche
had seene him

way, & how he was known of them in breaking of bread
36. And as they spake these thinges, Iesus himselve
stood in the middes of them, and sayd vnto them. Peace
be to you.

37. But they were abashed and afraide supposinge
that they had seene a spirite.

38. Then he saide vnto them: why are yee troubled
and wherefore doe doubts arise in your hearts?

39. Beholde my handes and my feete: for it is I my
selfe: handle mee and see, for a spirite hath not fleshe
and bones, as yee see mee haue.

40. And when hee had thus spoken, he shewed them
his handes and feete.

31. And their eyes were opened. By these wordes we are taught that there was
no Metamorphosis in Christ, that hee shoulde dasell mens eyes with variety of
shapes: (according as the Poets doe imagine their Proteus) but the fault was ra-
ther in the eyes of them which looked, because they were holden. As shortly
after he vanished not away from before the same eyes, because that his body
was of it selfe inuisible, but because that God withdrawing his force, their sight
was dulled. And it is no maruell, that Christ should as soone as he was knowne
sodainly vanish away: for it was nothing needfull that hee shoulde be seene any
longer, least that they (as of themselues they were too much bent to the earth)
should desire to draw him againe to an earthly life. Therefore so farre as was
necessary to testifie the resurrectiō, he reuealed himselfe to be seene: & by his so-
daine departure he taught, that he shuld be sought otherwhere then in the world:
for the ascending into heauen, was the fulfilling of the new life.

32. Did not our heart. The knowledge of Christ so wrought, that the disciples
had a lively feeling of that secret and hidden grace of the spirit, where with they
were before endued. For God oft times so worketh in his, that for a time they
know not the force of the spirit (whereof they were not yet voyd) or at the least
so as they cannot distinctly know the same: but they haue onely a feeling of it by
a secret instinct. So the disciples had before conceiued a zeale but without fee-
ling which they do now remember: now since that Christ was made knowne
vnto thē, they do at the length begin to consider that grace which they had be-
fore, without tast of the same, & they do perceiue that they had bin very blockish.
For they do reprove, themselves of slouth, as if they should say: How came it to
passe that we knew him not while he talked with vs? for when hee pierced into
our hearts, we should haue marked who it had beene. But they do not simply by
this naked signe gather that he was Christ, because that his speech was efficu-
all to enflame their mindes, but because they do giue vnto him the honour, that
while he speaketh with his mouth, their hearts also burnt within them through
the heat of the spirit. Paul verily reioyceth, 2. Cor. 3. 6, that the ministry of the
spirit was giuen vnto him, & the scripture doth oft times adorne the ministers of
the word with these titles, that they do conuert the heartes, lighten the mindes,
renew men that they may become pure & holy sacrifices: but then it doeth not
declare what they shall doe by their owne power, but rather what the Lorde

shall worke by them. But both these are to be founde together in one Christe, to viter the outward voyce, and effectually to fraine the heartes to obedience of faith. And it is not to be doubted, but that then he wrought a singular worke in the heartes of them two, that they at the length might feele a diuine heate inspired into them by him while he spake. For though the woordes of God is alwayes fire, yet the fire force did then by a peculiar and vnwonted manner shewe it selfe in Christes speech, which was an euident testimony of his diuine power. For it is he alone which baptiseth with the holy Ghost and fire, Luke 3. 16. Yet let vs remember that this is the lawfull fruit of the heauenly doctrine, who soeuer is the maister of the same, to kinde the fire of the spirit in the heartes, which may both boyle, and purge out, yea, and burne out the affections of the flesh, and shall truly stirre vpe a feruent loue of God, and cary vp men wholly into heauen, as it were in the flame of the same.

33. *And they arose the same houre.* The circumstance of the time, and the distance of the places, doe shew what an earnest desire these twomenne hadde to cary this message to their fellow disciples. Sith that it was in the euening that they entred into their lodging, it is probable that it was darke night before they knew that it was the Lorde: it was troublefome to trauaile three houre when it was late in the night: yet they doe presently arise, and runne with speede to Hierusalem. And certainly if they hadde come but the next day, their slacknesse hadde bene suspected: but now, when they had rather to defraude themselves of their nightly rest, then not to make the Apostles per-takers of their ioy with speede, their haste ycelled credite to that which they tolde. Nowe, when Luke sayeth that they arose the same houre, it is to be supposed that they came about midnight to the disciples. And as the same Luke doeth witness, they were then talking amongst themselves. Hereby therefore may their carefulnesse and earnest desire bee knowne, in that they passed almost the night waking, and they ceased not to make thorow inquiry, vntill the resurrection of Christe shoulde by many testimonies bee more fully knowne.

34. *Which sayde, the Lorde is risen.* Luke in these wordes sheweth that they which brought this gladd newes to the Apostles, for the confirming of their mindes, were likewise enformed of another vision. And it is not to be doubted, but that this rewarde of mutuall confirmation, was bestowed vpon them from God, as a recompence of their godly diligence. Also it may be gathered by the circumstance of the time: that after Peter had returned from the sepulchre, hee was wonderfull carefull, vntill that Christe reuealed himselfe vnto him: and therefore, the same day that he had visited the sepulchre, he obtained his request.

Nowe, it is not to be doubted, but that the gratulation amongst the eleven, was for this, because the Lord had appeared to Symon. But this seemeth not to agree with Markes wordes, who sayeth that these two were not beleued of the eleven. For howe coulde it bee, that they refusing these new witnesses, should vvaue in their doubting, which were already certaine? For, by saying that he was risen in deede, they doe graunt that the matter is out of controuersie.

First, I doe answer that in the generall speache is vsed the figure Synecdoche, because that some of them were harder, or lesse apt, and Thomas was more obstinate then all the rest. Also, we doe easily gather, that they were so perswaded, as men amazed doe vse, who haue not quietly meditated the matter: and wee knowe that such doe thereby fall into diuers doubts. How soeuer it was, it appeareth by Luke, that the greater part of them being in that feare, as in an exstasie, did not onely willingly embrace that which was sayde: but they strided against their owne distrust. For by this clause *in deede*, they doe take away from them all occasion of doubting. And a litle after we shal see that they fell againe, and the thirde time through admiration to their wauerings.

36. *Iesus himselfe stood in the midst of them.* Where Iohn reporteth the same hy storie at large, he differeth in some certaine circumstance: and Marke noteth the same somewhat otherwise. But as concerning Iohn, sith hee onely gathereth those things which were omitted by Luke, they two may bee easily reconciled. And truly, there is no diuersity in the summe of the matter, except any man would moue a controuersie about the time. For there it is sayde that Iesus entred in, when it was euening, but by the hy storie set downe by Luke, it appeareth that it was late in the night when he appeared: namely, when the disciples were returned from Emaus. But I doe not thinke that the time of the euening is to bee precisely vrged: but that rather which is sayd, may aptly and commodiously be applied to the late time of the night, for that when the Apostles after the euening, when it was night, hadde shut the doers and kept themselves secretly within the house, then Christe came vnto them. Further, Iohn doeth not note the first beginning of the night, but simply noteth that the daye being passed, and after the sunne was set, yea, and about midnight, Christ came vnlooked for amongst his disciples. Yet the question ariseth of an other matter. for Marke and Luke doe report that the eleuen were gathered together when Christ appeared vnto them, but Iohn sayeth that Thomas was then absent. But it is no absurditie that the number of eleuen is put for the apostles themselves, though one was away from the company. And wee sayde euen now, and the matter it selfe declareth, that Iohn doth more distinctly sette downe the particular poyntes, because that his purpose was to report those thinges which were omitted by others. Also, it is out of doubt that it is one and the same hy storie which was sette downe by the three, sith I O H N doeth expressly declare, that the Disciples sawe C H R I S T onely twise at Hierusalem, before they went into Galile: for hee sayeth that the thirde time hee appeared to them at the sea of Tyberias. And hee hadde noted two visions before: namely this, which befell the next morrowe after the resurrection, and the other which followed eight dayes after, though if any hadde rather expound it of the second, which is in Marke, I doe not greatly stande against it. Now I do retourne to Lukes wordes. He doeth not say, that Christe by his diuine power opened for himselfe the doers which were shut, but yet by the word *standing*, he noteth some such matter. For how could the Lord so dainely in the night, stand in the midst of them, except that he had entred in wonderfully? But the sae form of salutation is set downe by both, *Peace be to you*: wherby the Hebrewes do signify, that he wisheth vnto them glad and prosperous successe.

37. *But they were afraide.* Iohn maketh no mention of this feare : but ſith that he alſo ſayth that Chriſt ſhewed his handes and his ſide to the diſciples, it may be ſuppoſed that he omitted ſomewhat. Neither is it an vnwonted thing amongſt the Euangelites, while they ſtudy to bee compendious, to touch onely ſome part. Further, wee doe learne by Luke that they were ſo amaſed with the ſtraignesse of the ſight, that they durſt not beleeuẽ their owne eyes. A litle beefore they had made their account that the Lord was riſen, and they aſſuredly ſpake as of a matter well known vnto them : nowe, when they doe beholde him with their eyes, their ſenſes are ſo ſhaken with admiration, that they imagined him to bee a ſpirit. And though this errour was not without fault, which came of their infirmitie, yet they had not ſo forgotten themſelues, as that they ſhoulde bee afraide of deluſions : but though they thought that they were not mocked, yet they doe rather incline to this, that the image of the reſurrection was propoſed to them in a viſion by a ſpirite, then that Chriſte himſelfe ſhoulde bee preſent alue, who euen nowe of late was dead vpon the croſſe. So they ſuſpected it not to be a deceitfull viſion, as if it had beene a vaine Ghout : but being afraid, they only thought that they had beene ſhewed by a ſpirit, that which they ſawe in deede.

38. *Why are yee troubled?* By theſe wordes they are warned, that they ſhoulde caſt feare out of their mindes, that by gathering their ſenſes together, they might iudge as of a matter whereof they hadde good triall : for ſo long as men are holden with perturbations, they are blind in the manifeſt light. Therefore, to the end the diſciples may conceiue a ſure knowledge, they are commanded to conſider the matter with ſetled and quiet mindes. In the ſeconde parte Chriſt reprooueth the other fault : namely, that by wauering betweene diuers thoughts, they hindered themſelues. And he ſayeth that *doubtes doe ariſe*, ſignifying that the knowledge of the trueth is therefore choaked in them, that ſeeing they ſhoulde not ſee, becauſe they doe not ſuppreſſe the peruerſe imaginations : but rather by giuing them liberty, they giue them the preheminence. And truly we doe proue by experience, that this is too true : euen as the cloudes if the ſkie be cleare in the morning, being caried vppe on high, doe darken the cleare light of the Sunne : ſo while we doe permit our owne reaſons with too much liberty to ariſe againſt the word of God, that whiche was euident to vs beefore, is taken out of our ſight. It is meete when there appeared any ſhewe of abſurditie, by ſiſting the reaſons on either ſide to make ſearch : and it cannot otherwiſe be, but ꝑ our mindes in doubtful matters ſhould be caried hether and thither, but the meane muſt be holdẽ in ſobriety, leaſt that fleſh ſhuld liſt vp it ſelf higher thẽ it is meete, & ſhould ſende forth their thoughts far againſt the heauen.

39. *See my hands.* He maketh their corporall ſenſes witneſſes, leaſt they ſhoulde thinke ꝑ he ſettereth a ſhadow before them in ſtead of a body. And firſt, he diſtinguiſheth a corporall man from a ſpirite, as if hee ſhoulde ſay : Sight and feeling ſhall proue me to be the man in deede, which beefore was conuerſant with you : for I am cloathed with the ſame fleſh which was crucified, and as yet it beareth the markes. Further, ſith Chriſt ſayeth that his body is palpable, and compacte of ſounde bones, and by theſe notes, diſtinguiſheth the ſame from a ſpirit : this place is aply and truly alleaged by our men, to the reſelling of the groſſe cr-

your of transubstantiation of bread into the body, or of the locall presence of the body, which preposterous menne doe imagine to bee in the holy supper. For they would haue the body of Christ to be there, where there appeareth to bee no signe of the body. but by this meanes it should follow, that he had changed his owne nature, that he should cease to be that which he was, and whereby it was proued to be the very body by christ himselfe. If they do except against this, that his side was then pierced, & his feet boared through with the wounds of the nayles, and so also his hands, but that Christ is now whole and sound in heauen: this cauilt is quickly answered. For the question is not onely in what hee appeared, but what hee speaketh of the true nature of his flesh. And he doth attribute this as proper to him, that he may be felt, that he may differ from a spirit. Therefore also at this day it is necessary that this difference should remaine betwene the flesh and the spirit: which by Christes wordes was appoynted, as it may be gathered to be for ever. And of the woundes this must be accounted, that by this lesson he teacheth all vs, that Christ rather rose for vs then for himselfe, when as hee being the conquerour of death, & endewed with the blessed and celestially immortalitie, yet for their sakes which are his, hee would for a time beare the markes of the crosse. This truly was a wonderfull fauour towards the Disciples, that he hadde rather want somewhat himselfe of the perfect glory of the resurrection, then that they should be defrauded of such a helpe for their faith. But it is a foolish and an olde wifes fantasie to imagine that hee should yet remaine so wounded, when hee shall come iudge of the world.

MARKE. 14. *Hee appeared vnto the eleuen as they sate together.* I doe thinke that the participle *anakeimenois*, is not heere vsed for sitting downe at meate, (as some doe translate it) but for sitting together: and this is not done without reason: if this yet be agreed vpon, to be the first vision which is here described: For it was no time to suppe about midnight. Also, if the table had beene ready prepared, it should not agree with that which Luke sayeth a little after, that Christ demanded whether they had any meate to eate. And it is a phrase vsed in Hebrew, to sit downe for to rest in some place. And the reproofe which followeth rather, belongeth to the first vision then to the second: for (as Iohn witnesseth) the Disciples reioyced when they hadde seene the Lord the morrow after the Passouer, their vnbeleife was then reproofed. That seemeth to bee too much restrained that many doe restraine these wordes of Marke to Thomas onely. Therefore I had rather to expound it simplie, that Christ when he first appeared to the Apostles, blamed them, because they beleueed not them which had beene eye witnesses of his resurrection.

Though the hardnesse of heart is not condemned in this alone, that they gaue no credite to menne, but because they being conuicted with the successe of the matter it self, they would not yet accept the testimonie of the Lord. Therefore sith Peter and Mary, Cleopas and his fellowe, were not the first witnesses of the resurrection, but onely subscribed to Christes wordes, it followeth that the rest of the Apostles did iniurie to the Lorde, because they beleueed not his wordes, which yet were now proued true by their effect.

Wherefore their hardnesse of heart is worthily reproofed, because that a corrupt obstinacie was added to their slouthfulnesse, as if that of set purpose they should desire to suppress that which appeared to be true, not that their purpose was to extinguish the glory of their maister, or to reprove him of vanitie, but because that their amasednesse hindered them from yeelding themselves to be taught. To bee short, heere is not a wilfull peruerfenesse condemned (as it was sayd before) but a blind slouthfulness, which sometime hardneth men, which otherwise are neither wicked nor rebellious.

Mathevv.

Marke.

Luke 24.

41. And while they yet beleueed not for ioy, and wondered, he sayde vnto them: Haue ye heere any meate?

42. And they gaue him a piece of broyled fishe, and of an honie combe.

43. And he tooke it, and did eate before them.

44. And hee sayde vnto them: These are the words whiche I spake vnto you, while I was yet with you, that all must be fulfilled, which are wrayten of mee in the lawe of Moses, and in the Prophets, and in the Psalmes.

45. Then opened he their vnderstanding, that they might vnderstand the scripture

46. And sayde vnto them: Thus it is written, and thus it behooued Christ to suffer, and to rise againe from the dead the third day.

47. And that repentance and remission of sinnes should be preached in his name among all nations beginning first at Hierusalem.

48. Nowe, ye are witnesses of these things.

49. And beholde, I will sende the promise of my father vpon you: but tarrye in the citie of Hierusalem, vntill yee be endued with power from an hie.

41. While they yet beleueed not. This place also sheweth that it was not of purpose that they beleueed not, as they which doe purpose in their mind not to beleue: but sith their will was earnestly bent to beleue, the vehemencie of their affection held them to bound, that they could not be at rest. For certainly, the ioy wherof Luke maketh mention arose of no other cause but of faith, and yet it was a hinderance that their faith could not get the victorie. Therefore let vs note how suspicious we should be of the vehemencie of our affections, which though it shoulde arise of good beginniges, yet it carieth vs as ouerthrowne out: of the right way. Wee are also admonished howe diligently we should strue, against the hinderances of fayth, sith the ioy conceiued of the presence of Christe, was a cause of the Apostles incredulitie. And againe wee doe perceiue howe louingly and kindly Christe vseth the infirmities of his, who refuseth

refuseth not to hold them vp with a new supply, which were ready to fall, And though he hauing obtained the newnesse of the heauenly life, hadde no more neede of meate and drinke then the Angels, yet hee willingly submitte himselfe to the common order of mortall men. All the course of his life hadde hee made himselfe subiect to the necessitie of meate and drinke : now being exempted frō the same, he eateth meate to this ende, that he may perswade the disciples of the resurrection. So we see, that without regard of himselfe, he became wholly ours. This is a true and Godly meditation of this hystorie, wherein the faithfull may wade profitably, forsaking curious questions, as if the corruptible meate was digested, what nourishment shoulde the immortall body of Christe take thereby : then what became of the excrements. As if that it were not at his pleasure, who created all things of nothing, to turne a little meat to nothing, when it shoulde so seeme good to him. Therefore, as Christ talked in deede of a fish and a honycombe, that he might shew himselfe to bee man, so it is not to bee doubted, but that by his diuine power hee consumed that which was not needfull for nourishment. So I doubt not but that the Angells at Abrahams table as they had very bodies, they ate and drank in deede: yet I do not therefore grant that they vsed meate and drinke for the infirmity of the flesh: but sith that for Abrahams sake, they were cloathed with the shape of man, the Lord graunted this also to his seruant, that these heauenly guests should eate before his tent. Also, if we graunt that the bodies which they had taken for a time, after they had done their message were brought to nothing, who will deny but that the same became of the meats?

44. *These are the wordes.* Though by Matthew and Marke it shall after ward appeare that the speech which was had in Galile, was not vnlike, yet I doe think it probable, that Luke doeth now report that which befell the morow after the resurrection. For that which Iohn deliuereth of that day, *that he breathed vpon them*, that he might giue them the holy Ghost, doth agree with Lukes woords, which shall presently followe, *hee opened their mindes, that they might vnderstand the scriptures.* Christe also in these wordes doeth sharply reprove their grosse and slouthfull forgetfulnesse, in that they beeing before admonished that hee should rise againe, that they should bee so astonished, as if neuer any thing had beene spoken to them. For his woordes doe signifie as much, as if hee shoulde say : Why stay you as at a matter straunge and vnlooked for, which I haue yet often times spoken of before? Why doe you not rather remember my words? For if you haue hitherto accounted me to be true, this shoulde haue beene well knowne to you nowe by my doctrine, before it shoulde come to passe. In summe, Christe doth secretly complaine, that hee hauing spred his doctrine, his labour was spent in vaine amongst his Apostles. Also he doth more sharply reprove their foolishnesse, when that he sayeth that hee deliuereth not any new thinge : but onely called to minde what hadde beene spoken by the law and the Prophets, which they should haue knowne from their childhood. But as they were ignorant of the whole doctrine of godlines, yet there was nothing more absurde, then not to embrace with speede, that which they were perswaded to proceed from God. For that was holden as a generall rule in that whole nation, that there is no religion, but that which is contained in the lawe

and the Prophets. But here is set down a more full diuision, then in other places of the Scripture: for besides the lawe and the Prophets, the Psalmes are added in the third place, which, though they may by right bee numbred amongst the Propheties, yet they haue some thing proper and distincte: yet that two folde diuision which we haue seene other where, doth notwithstanding comprehend the whole Scripture.

45. *Then he opened their minde.* Because the Lorde before executing the office of a teacher, hadde profited little or nothing amongst his disciples, now he beginneth to teach them inwardly by his spirit. For the words are throwne in vaine into the ayre, vntill the mindes be lightned with the gift of vnderstanding. It is true that the word of God is like vnto a candle: but it giueth light in darkenesse, and amongst the blinde, vntill the eyes be lightened inwardly by the Lorde, whose onely gifte it is to lighten the blinde, Psalme an hundredth, and sixe and forty, and the eight verse. And heereby it appeareth howe great the corruption of our nature is, when the light of life offered in the heauenly Oracles, doth profite vs nothing. But now, if by vnderstanding we do not perceiue what should be right, how should our will be able to yeeld obedience? Therefore it must be graunted that wee are weake euery way, so that the heauenly doctrine is not otherwise profitable and effectually vs, but so farre as the scripture doeth frame our mindes to vnderstand the same: and our heartes to bee subiecte to the yoke of the same: and therefore that wee may become fitte disciples vnto him, it is necessary that all trust in our owne witte being cast away, to aske for light from heauen, and also leauing the foolish opinion of free will, to deliuer our selues to bee gouerned by God. And it is not without a cause that Paule in the first to the Corinthians the 3. chapter, & the eightene verse, doeth commaunde menne to become foolish, that they may be wise to God: for the light of the spirite cannot bee extinguished by a worse darknes, then by trusting to our owne witte. Furthermore, lette the readers obserue that the disciples hadde not the eyes of the minde opened, wherewith without the helpe of God they might discern mysteries: but as they are comprehended in the scriptures: and so was that fulfilled, which was spoken in the hundredth and nineteene Psalme, and eightene verse. Lighten mine eyes, that I may consider the maruellous workes of thy law.

For God doth not giue such a spirite to his children, as shoulde abolish the vse of his woorde, but rather it shoulde make the same fruitfull. Wherefore fanaticall menne doe wickedly vnder pretence of reuelations grant themselves liberty to despise the scripture. For that which we doe reade here of the Apostles, Christe worketh daily in all his, for that by his spirit he directeth them to vnderstand the scripture, but not to cary them to vaine imaginations. But it is demaunded why Christe hadde rather loose his labour for the space of whole three yeares, then to open their eyes presently: I doe answere firste, though the fruite of the labour doeth not so speedily appeare, yet it was not vnprofitable: for beeing lightened a newe they also felte the profite of the for-
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mer time. For I doe take that their mindes were opened, not onely that they might afterwarde bee apt to learne if any thing shoulde bee taught them: but that they might call to memorie for their profite the doctrine hearde beefore in vaine.

Furthermore, that ignorance by the space of three yeares, doeth teach vs a profitable lesson, that they obtained not this knowledge a newe by any other meanes then by the heauenly light. Adde also that Christe in this shewed an euident token of his Godhead: because that hee was not onely a minister of the outward voyce, which should giue a sounde in the eares, but by his secrete power hee pierced into the mindes: and so hee declareth that it becometh to him alone, whiche Paule denieth to the doctours of the Church, 1. Corinthians 3. 7. yet it is to bee noted that the Apostles were not so voyde and deprived of the light of vnderstanding but that they knew some fewe principles: but because it was only a small taste which they had, this is accounted the beginning of true vnderstanding, while the vaile beeing remooued, they doe see Christe plainly in the lawe and the Prophets.

46 *Hee sayde vnto them, so it is written.* By this text is their quarrel confuted, which doe pretende that the outward doctrine is but in vaine, if that wee haue in vs by nature no power to vnderstand the same. To what ende say they, should the Lorde speake to the deafe? But wee see where the Spirite of Christe, which is the inward maister, performeth his part, that the labour of the minister which teacheth, is not lost. For after that Christ endewed his with the spirit of vnderstanding, they do receiue fruit by that which he teacheth out of the Scriptures. And euen amongst the reprobate, though the outward voyce vaniseth away as if it were dead, yet notwithstanding it maketh them inexcusable.

And as concerning the wordes of Christ, they are gathered of that principle. It is necessary that what soeuer is written, should be fullfilled, because that God witnessed nothinge by his Prophets, but that which hee would certainly bring to passe. But by the same wordes wee are taught what must bee chiefly learned out of the lawe and the Prophets, for sith Christe is the ende and soule of the lawe, without him and besides him, what knowledge soeuer is obtained, is vaine and friuolous. Wherefore, as any manne shall desire to profite best by the Scripture, lette him bee allwayes bent to this poynt. And now CHRIST doeth heere firste sette downe his death and resurrection, and afterwarde the fruite whiche shall come to vs by them both. For whence commeth repentance and forgiuenesse of sinnes, but because our olde manne is crucified with CHRIST, Romanes 6. and the 6. verse, that through the same wee may arise to newnes of life: for by the sacrifice of his death our sins are cleansed, and our filthines washed with bloude, but righteousnesse is obtained by the resurrection.

Therefore hee teacheth that the cause and matter of our saluation must bee soughte in his death and resurrection: for from thence proceedeth reconciliation with GOD, and regeneration into a newe and spirituall life.

And

And therefore it is plainly expresse, that as well forgiveness of sinnes as repentance, cannot be preached but in his name: For neither can wee hope for imputation of righteousness, neither growe to the deniall of our selues, and newnes of life, but so farre forth as hee is our righteousness and sanctification, 1. Cor. 1. 30. But because wee haue entreated at large in another place of this summe of the Gospell, it is better that the readers shoulde thence seeke for any thing whiche they haue forgotten, then to be burdened with repetition.

47. *Amongst all nations, beginning first.* Nowe doeth Christe at the length declare euidently, that which he had before concealed that the grace of redemption which he brought, dooth generally appertain to all nations. For though the calling of the Gentiles had bene oft foretold by the Prophets, yet the same had not bene so reuealed, as that the Iewes should easily admit them into the hope of saluation with them. Therefore, vntill the resurrection, Christ was not supposed to bee the redeemer, but of that one speciall people. And then was the wall first broken downe, that they which before were strangers, and scattered abroad, might be gathered into the sheepfold of the Lord, Yet in the meane season, lest the couenaut of God might seeme to be in vaine, Christe placeth the Iewes in the first degree, commanding that they shuld first beginne at Hierusalem: for because that God had peculiarly adopted the stocke of Abraham, it was meete that it should be preferred before the rest of the world. This is the right of the first begotten, which Ieremiah assigneth vnto them, 31. 9. Paule also doeth euery where obserue this order diligently, as to the Ephes. 2. 17. he sayeth that Christ comming, he preached peace to them, which were neare, and then to strangers and them a farre of.

48. *Nowe ye are witnesses.* As yet he doeth not send them forth to publish the Gospell, but only declareth for what purpose he appoynted, that they might prepare themselves for that time: and partly by this consolation he mittigateth their sorrowe, partly with this spurre hee correcteth their slouth. When as they being guilty to themselves of their late falling away, it was meete for them to haue sorrowfull hearts, Christ here beyond all hope, bestoweth vpon them this incredible honour, enioyning them to publish the embassage of eternall saluation to the whole world. By this meanes he doeth not onely restore them perfectly: but with the greatnes of this new grace, he doeth thoroughly abolish the remembrance of the offence. Yet withall as I sayde, he pricketh them forward, lest they shoulde bee as slacke and slouthfull to publish the faith, whereof they were ordained preachers.

49. *Behold I will send the promise.* Least the Apostles should be afraide of their own weaknes, he comforteth them with the hope of new grace which should coe vpon them, as if that he shoulde say: Though you thinke your selues vnmeete for so great a burden, yet there is no cause why you shoulde bee discouraged: for I will supply from heauen that power whiche I knowe to be wanting in you. Nowe, that hee might the better confirme them in this hope, hee maketh mention of the holy Ghost which was promised of the father. For to the ende they might readily prepare themselves to the worke, GOD meeting with their distrust, hadde encouraged them with his promise. Now, Christe substituting
him-

himselfe in his fathers place, taketh vpon him to performe that gifte, wherein he doth againe challenge to himselfe a diuine power. For this is a part of that glory which God by oath denyed to giue to an other, *Isai 41. 8.* to endue weak men with a heauenly power. Therefore, if it belongeth to Christ, it followeth that he is God, who spake in the times past by the mouth of the Prophet. But though God promised a speciall grace to the Apostles, and Christ bestowed it: yet this must generally be noted, that no mortall man is of himselfe meete for the preaching of the Gospell, but so farre forth as God cloathing them with his spirit, supplyeth their nakednes and want. And certainly, as Paule doth not ex- clame of the Apostles alone, *2. Cor. 2. 16.* who shall be found meete for these things? but he declareth that there is no mortall man meet for so great a worke: so it is necessary that what soeuer ministers of the Gospell God stirreth vppe, should be endued with the heauenly spirit: and therefore it is promised to all the teachers of the Church without exception in euery place.

But tarry yee. Least they shoulde run forth to teach before the time, Christe commandeth them to be quiet and silent, vntill that he by his appointment sending them forth, shall vse their helpe in time conuenient. And this was a profit- able tryall of their obedience, that they hauing the vnderstanding of the Scrip- ture, and endued with the grace of the spirite, yet because the Lord forbadde them to speake, they held their peace as dumbe men: for wee doe know howe desirously they woulde shew themselues abroad, which thinke that they could doe this with prayse and admiration. And it may be, that by this delay, Christ woulde punish their slouthfulnesse, because they had not presently gone the same day into Galile at his commaundement. What soeuer the matter were, wee are taught that nothing must be attempted, but by the calling of the Lord. Where- fore though they wanted not hability to teach puplicly, yet let them containe themselues as priuate men in silence, vntill that hee shall leade them soorth in his hande into the Theater. Further, in that they are commaunded to stay at Hierusalem, it must be vnderstood, after they should returne from out of Galile. For (as we shall a litle after heare out of Matthew) though hee reuealed him- selfe to be seene at Hierusalem, yet he chaunged not that which he had first de- termined of Galile. Therefore the meaning of the wordes is, after he hadde giuen them their commaundements in the place appointed, yet his will was that they should as yet remaine silent for a time, vntill that hee shoulde furnish them with a new power.

Matth 28.

16. Then the eleuen disciples went into Galile, into a mountain, where Iesus had appointed them.

17. And when they saw him, they worshipped him: but some doubt- ed.

18. And Iesus came and spake vn- to them, saying: All power is giuen vnto

Marke. 16.

15. And he said vnto them: Go yee into all the world, & preach the Gospell to euery creature.

16. He that shall beleene and be baptised, shall be saued: but he that will not beleene, shall be damned.

17. And these tokens shall fol- lowe them that beleene: In my name

Luke.

18. And he said vnto them, I am with you alway, vntill I be sent.

unto me in heauen and in earth

19. Go therefore and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and the Sonne and the holy Ghost.

20. Teachinge them to obserue all thinges, what so euer I haue commanded you: and loe, I am with you alwaye vntill the ende of the worlde. Amen.

name, they shall cast out deuils.

& shall speake with new tonges

18. And shall take away serpents, and if they shall drinke any deadly thing it shall not hurt them, they shall lay their hands on the sicke, and they shall recover.

16. Then the eleven disciples. Matthew passing ouer those things which we haue reported out of the other three, doeth onely teach where the eleauen disciples were set on the Apostolicall offices. For their purpose was not (as we haue often scene before) to prosecute all the particular parts of a hystory: because it seemed sufficient to the holy Ghost, who directed their stile, by gathering their testimonies together to sette downe the summe, such as we doe see. Therefore Matthew doeth chuse that which especially appertained to vs: namely, that Christ when he appeared to the disciples, also created them Apostles, which should carry the embassage of eternall life into all the coastes of the worlde. But though there is no mention made of the Mount in any other place, yet we do gather that this place of Galilee was noted to Mary: yet it is maruell that some hauing scene Christ twise already, shoulde as yet doubt of him. If any man like to referre this to the first manifestation, there shall bee no absurdity therein: for the Euangelistes do sometime vse to mixe diuers things together. But it must not seeme absurde, if the remnants of feare shoulde driue some againe to a new wauering: for wee know, as Christ appeared, they were afraid and amazed, vntill their mindes were settled by oft seeing him. Wherefore, the sense in my iudgement, is, that some doubted at the firste, vntill Christe approached neare and more familiarly vnto them: and when hee was verily and certainly knowne, they worshipped: because that the brightnesse of the diuine glory was made manifest. And it may bee that the same reason driue them sodainly to doubt, which led them afterwarde to worshippe: for the habite of a seruant being layde aside, there then appeared nothinge in him but that which was celestiall.

18. And Iesus came and spake vnto them. It is not to bee doubted. but that this coming tooke away all scruple. But before that Matthew declareth that the disciples had the office of teaching enioyned them, he sayeth that Christe first spake of his owne power, and not without cause: for a small authority coulde not suffice heere, but it behooueth him to haue a great and a diuine Emperie, who commaundeth that life eternall should be promised in his name, that all the world should be brought vnder his gouernement, and that the doctrine should be preached, which by ouerthrowing euery high thing, shoulde bring all mankinde vnder. And by this preface Christ doth not onely stirre vp the disciples to execute their office boldly and freely, but he establisheth the faith of his gospel to continue in all ages.

For certainly, the Apostles coulde neuer haue beene perswaded to take

so hard a matter in hand, except they knew that their reuenger sate in heauen who had all power giuen him. For without such a fortresse, it had beene impossible to prouaile any thing. But when they doe heare, that hee whom they doe serue, doth gouerne heauen & earth, they are with this one thing very thoroughly furnished to ouercome all teites. And as concerning *h* hearers if *h* contemptible estate of the which doe preach the Gospell doth weaken or hinder their faith let them learne to liſte vppe their eyes to the authour himſelfe, by whose power the maiestie of the Gospell must be esteemed, and so it shall come to passe, that they shall not be so bold as to despise him, speaking by his ministers. And hee doeth expressly make himſelfe Lorde and King as well of heauen as of earth, beecaufe that by the preaching of the Gospell he bringing men in obedience to him, doth erreſt the throne of his kingdome vpon earth, and regenerating them which are his into a new life, and calling them to the hope of saluation, hee openeth the heauens, that hee may exalt them to the blessed immortalitie with the Angels, who before not onely crept below in the worlde, but had beene drowned in the bottomlesse pit of death. But let vs remember that Christe had alwayes his authoritie with his father, and this was giuen vnto him in our fleshe, or (that I may speake more plainly) in the person of the Mediator. For he glorieth not of that eternall power which hee had before the worlde was created: but of that which hee receiued now, when hee was ordained the iudge of the worlde. And it is to bee noted that this Empire was not manifestly knowne vntill that hee was risen from the dead: becauſe that then at the length being adorned with the ornamentes of a mightie king, hee shewed himſelfe in authoritie. Thither also appertayneth that saying of Paul to the Phillippians, 2. 9. Hee humbled himſelfe, wherefore God hath exalted him, and giuen him a name above euery name, &c. And though the sitting at the right hand of the father is set after his ascention into heauen, as latter in order: yet beecaufe the resurrection and the ascention into heauen, are thinges mutually ioyned together, Christe hath good cause to speake so royally of his power.

19. *Goe therefore.* Though Marke, after hee hath declared that Christe appeared to the eleuen disciples, doeth presently set downe the commaundement of preaching the Gospell, yet hee doeth not note it as an action presently done. For wee doe gather by the text in Mathew, that this was not done before they went into Galile. But the summe is, that by preaching the Gospell euery where, they shoulde bring all nations into the obedience of faith: then, that they shoulde seale and confirme their doctrine with the seale of the Gospell. In Mathew they are simply commaunded to teach: but Marke setteth downe what kinde of doctrine it shoulde bee: namely, that they shoulde preach the Gospell.

And shortly after is also added this reſtrainte, that they shoulde teache them to obserue what soeuer thinges the Lorde commaunded. Heereby wee learne that the Apostleshippe is not a vaine title of honour, but an office of labour: and therefore there is nothing more absurde, or intollerable, then that these masked menne shoulde challenge this honour, who rainging in idleneſſe, doe reiecte the office of teaching from them.

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The Pope of Rome and his band doe proudly boast of this succession, as if that they sustained the same person in common with Peter and his colleagues: but in the mean season they haue no more care of the doctrine then baudes or the Priests of Bacchus and Venus. But with what face I beseech you, doe they thrust themselves into their place, who they heare were created to be preachers of the Gospell? But though they are not ashamed to bewray their owne impudencie: yet with all readers of sounde iudgement this one worde is strong enough to ouerthrow their fantastick Hierarchie, that no man can be a succellour of the Apostles: but hee which serueth Christe by preaching of the Gospell: to be shorte who soeuer doeth not performe the duties of a teacher, doth falsly & wrongfully take the name of a teacher. For this is the Priestthoode of the New testament, with the spirituall sworde of the woorde to kill menne for a sacrifice to GOD. Wherefore it followeth that they all are degenerate and counterfait sacrificers, whiche doe not apply the office of teaching.

Teache all nations. Heere Christe by taking away the difference, doeth make the Gentiles equall with the Iewes, and doth generally admitte them both into the fellowship of the couenant. Thither also appertaineth the woorde *Going*. For the Prophets vnder the lawe were restrained within the boundes of Iuda: but nowe the partition wall being ouerthrowne, the Lorde commandeth the ministers of the Gospell to goe farre abroad for the spreading of the doctrine of saluation through all the coastes of the worlde. For though the dignity of the first borne (as we touched euen nowe) shoulde at the firste remaine amongst the Iewes, yet the inheritance of life was common to the Gentiles. So was fulfilled that prophesie of Isaiah with the like, that Christe is giuen to be a light to the Gentiles, that he mighte bee the saluation of God vnto the outmost parte of the earth, Isai. 49. 6. That is Markes meaning by all creatures: for after that peace was preached to them of the householde the same message cometh to them also which are a farre off, and to straungers. Further how necessary it was that the Apostles shoulde be plainly admonished of the calling of the Gentiles, it doth thereby appeare, that after they had receiued the commandement to goe vnto them, they were greatly afraid, as if they should defile themselves & the doctrine, Act. 10. 28.

Baptising them. Christ commandeth that they shuld be baptized, which shuld giue their name to the Gospell, and should professe themselves to be disciples: partly that it mighte be a witness vnto them of eternal life before God, partly that it mighte be an outward signe of faith before men. For we knowe by this signe god doth witness vnto vs the grace of his adoption: for he grafteth vs into the body of his son that he might account vs to be of his flocke & therefore our spirituall washing wherewith he reconcileth vs vnto himself, & the new righteousnesse are there represented. But as God confirmeth his grace vnto vs by this zeale, so who soeuer do offer themselves to baptism, they do in like maner bind their faith as it were by giuing of an obligation. Also sith the Apostles haue these duties expressly committed to their charge together with the preaching of the Gospell, it followeth there are no other lawfull ministers of baptism but they which do
also

also minister doctrine. Therefore, where libertie hath beene graunted to priuate men, and also to women to baptise, because it is not agreeable to the institution of Christ, it was nothing else but a meere prophanation. Also, where the first place is appoynted for doctrine, there is a true difference set downe betwene this mysterie and the adulterous rites of the Gentiles, wherewith they doe enter themselues into their religions: for vntill God by his word shall giue life to the earthly element, it is made no sacrament for vs. As superstition hath a preposterous emulation at all the workes of God, so foolish men doe frame diuers sacraments according to their owne pleasure: but because they want the worde as the soule, they are vaine and toyish shadowes. Wherefore let vs note that by the power of the doctrine it commeth to passe that the signes doe put on a newe nature: so as the outward washing of the flesh, beginneth to be a spirituall pledge of regeneration by the doctrine of the Gospell going before: & this is the right consecration, in steade whereof Popery hath brought in vpon vs magicall exorcismes. And therefore it is sayde in Marke. *Hee that shall beleene and be baptised,* by whiche wordes Christe doeth not onely exclude hypocrites from the hope of saluation, who being without faith, are onely puffed vpp with the outward signe: but hee ioyneth baptisme to the holy band of doctrine, that this shoulde be nothing else, then an addition to that. But because Christ commaundeth them to teach beefore he commaundeth to baptise, and willeth that onely belceuers bee receiued to baptisme, baptisme seemeth not to be rightly ministred, except that faith shoulde goe beefore. And vnder this pretence the Anabaptists haue stirred much against the baptisme of infants. Yet it is not harde to be answered, if any manne shall consider the reason of the commandement. Christ commaundeth that the embassage of eternall saluation shoulde be caryed to all the Gentiles: hee confirmeth the same by adding the seale of baptisme. And there is good cause why the beleeuing of the woorde is sette before baptisme sith the Gentiles were altogether straungers from God, and had no fellowship with the elect people: for otherwise it should haue beene a lying signe which should offer forgiuenesse of sinnes, and the gift of the spirit to vnbeleuers, who as yet were not the members of Christ. And wee knowe that they are gathered by faith, who were before dispersed. Now it is demanded vpon what condition God adopted them to be his sonnes, which before were straungers. It cannot certainly be denied, when hee once accepted them into his fauour, but that hee extendeth the same to their children and nephewes. At the coming of CHRIST he shewed himselfe generally to be a Father both to the Gentiles and to the Iewes. Therefore it is necessary that the promise whiche was in times past made to the Iewes, shoulde also at this day be of force amongst the Gentiles, I will be thy God and the GOD of thy seede after thee: Gen. 17. 7. So wee see them, which by faith are entred into the Church of God, to be accounted for the members of Christe, and also to be called to the inheritance of saluation. And yet baptisme is not by this meanes separated from faith or doctrine: for though yong infants do not yet by reason of their age take hold of the grace of God by faith, yet God accepting of their parents, doeth also embrace them. I doe therefore denie it to be rashly done to baptise infants, whereto the Lorde doth call them, while he promisseth

them to be their God. *In the name of the father.* This place doeth reach the full and euident knowledge of God, the which beeing but darkely shadowed forth vnder the lawe and the Prophets, at the length sprang forth vnder the kingdom of Christe. The olde fathers neuer durst call God their Father, if they hadde not taken this hope from Christe their head: neither were they altogether ignorant of the eternall wisdom of God, whiche was the fountaine of light and life. It was also one of their confessed principles, that God shewed forth his power in the holy Ghost. But at the arising of the Gospell, God was much more manifestly shewed vnder the three persons: for the father then reuealed himselfe plainly in the sonne, his liuely and expresse image: and Christ himselfe lightening the world by the cleare brightnesse of his spirit, made both him and himselfe to be knowne. But it is not without cause that heere is expresse mention made of the Father, of the Sonne, and of the spirit: for the force of baptisme cannot be apprehended otherwise, then by beginning at the free mercy of the Father, who reconcileth vs vnto himselfe by his onely begotten Son: then shall Christ himselfe appeare before vs with the sacrifice of his death: and at the length the holy ghost shall also come. by whom he washeth and regenerateth vs: and at the length he maketh vs partakers of all their good gifts. So wee doe see, that wee doe not rightly knowe G O D, except that our faith doe distinctly conceiue three persons in one essence, and that the efficacie and fruit of baptisme doth come from thence, that G O D the Father adopteth vs in his Sonne, and by the Spirit, we beeing purged from the filthinesse of our flesh, he reformeth vs to righteoulnesse.

M A R. 16. *He that shall beleue.* This promise was added, that it might allure all mankind to faith: as againe for the terrifying of the vnbeleeuers there followeth a denounced sentence of grieuous destruction. But it is no maruel that saluation is promised to the faithfull. for by beleeuing in the only begotten Son of God, they are not onely accounted amongst the Sonnes of God, but beeing endued with the righteousnes of his grace, and with the spirit of regeneration, they doe possesse the summe of eternall life. Baptisme is ioyned with the faith of the Gospell, that wee might know that therein is engraued the marke of our saluation, for if it auailed not to testifie the grace of God, Christe had vnproperly sayd: *that they should be saved, which should beleue, and be baptised.* Though it must also be noted, that it is not so necessarily required to saluation, that all they shoulde of necessity perish, which should not obtaine the same. For it is not ioyned here to faith, as halfe the cause of saluation, but as a testimony. I doe grante that this necessity is laid vpon men, that they woud not neglect the signe of the grace of God: but though God for their infirmities vseth such helps, I deny his grace to bee tied vnto them. In this maner wee may say that it is not simply necessary, but onely in respect of our obedience. In the second part, where Christ condemneth them which do not beleue, he meaneth the rebellious, who while they do refuse saluation offered, doe draw vpon themselues amore grieuous punishment, and they are not now onely ensnared in the common destruction of mankind, but they doe sustaine the fault of their owne ingratitude.

17. *These tokens shall follow them which beleue.* As the Lorde hadde by myracles confirmed the faith of his Gospell, so long as hee was conuersant in the world, so now hee causeth the same to flourish in the time to come, least
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the disciples should think that the same were tied to his corporall presence. For it was to great purpose that the diuine power of Christ should flourish amongst the faithfull, that it might manifestly appeare that hee was risen from the dead, whereby his doctrine might remaine, and continue, and his name should bee immortall. Further, where he furnisheth the faithfull with this gift, it must not be drawne to all. For we know that the giftes were diuersly disposed, that the power of myracles should be but in the hands of some. But because which was giuen to a few, was common to the whole Church, and the signes which one wrought, auailed for the confirmation of all, Christ doth rightly name the beleeuers generally. The meaning therefore is, that the faithfull should be ministers of the same power, he had been wonderfull before in Christ, that in his absence the seale of the Gospell might be the more sure: as in Iohn 14. 12. hee promiseth that they shall doe the same and greater thinges. And for the setting forth of the glory and deitie of Christ, it was sufficient that some few of the beleeuers were furnished with this power. And though Christ doeth not expresse whether he would that this gift should be but for a time, or remaine for euer in his church: Yet it is more probable that these myracles were promised but for a time, for the setting forth of the Gospell, which was new and as yet obscure. And it may be, that for the fault of vnthankfulness, the world was deuiued of this honour: yet I do thinke that this was the proper end of myracles, that the doctrine of the gospell should at the beginning want no approbation. And wee doe certainly see that the vse of them ceased not long after, or at the least the examples of them were so rare, that it may be gathered that they were not like common to all ages. Yet either the preposterous couetousnes or ambition of them which followed after, so wrought least they should be without myracles altogether, that they fained myracles for themselves. And by this meanes there was a gate opened to sitthans falsehoods, that not onely false sleights, should succede in the place of truth, but that vnder pretence of signes, the simple might be led away from the right faith. And certainly it was meete that curious men: who not content with lawfull allowance, but seeking after new myracles should be deluded by such deceits. This is the reason, why Christe otherwhere foretold that the kingdome of antichrist should be full of lying signes, Mat. 24. 24. and that Paul testifieth the same, 2. Thes. 2: 9. Wherefore, that myracles may rightly confirme our faith, let our mindes containe themselves in that sobriety whereof I spake: whereof it also followeth, that it is a foolish quarrell of theirs, which doe obiekt that our doctrine wanteth myracles. As if that it were not the same which Christ hath most sufficiently sealed heretofore. But in this argument I am the shorter, because that I haue entreated of it already more fully in sundry places. MAT. 10. *Teaching them to obserue.* By these words (as I sayd before) Christ sending forth his disciples, doth declare that he doth not wholly resign vnto them those things which appertained to him, as if that hee would leaue off to be the maister of his church: For hee dismisseth the Apostles with this exception, that they should not thrust forth their own deuises, but that they should purely and faithfully dispence from hand (as they say) to hand that which hee commanded. And I wish that the Pope would submit the power which he challengeth to himselfe to this rule. For we should easily suffer him to bee Peter or Pauls successor, so that he would not raigne tyrannically ouer soules.

But sith he reiecteth the gouernment of Christ, defileth the church with his owne filthy trifles, it doth heereby appeare sufficiently, how far he fallieth from the Apostolicall function. In summe, let vs learne that by these wordes they are made doctours of the Church, not which doe utter what soeuer they shall thinke good, but which shall also themselves depend vpon the mouth of this one maister, that they may procure disciples to him, and not vnto themselves.

Beholde I am with you. Because Christ did lay a charge vpon the Apostles, which they could not discharge, vsing onely the power of man, hee doth comfort them with the hope of his helpe from heauen. For before that he promisseth to be present with them, he sayth first that he is king of heauen and of earth, who with his hand and power governeth all things. Therefore this pronounce (1) must be read as a word of great force: as if he had sayd, if the Apostles would thoroughly doe their duty, they must not looke what they can doe themselves, but they must depend vpon his inuincible power, vnder whose directions they doe goe to warre. But the maner of his presence, which the Lord promisseth to his, must spiritually be vnderstood: for it is not needefull that hee shoulde descend from heauen to helpe vs, sith by the grace of his spirit, as with a hand stretched out from heauen he may helpe vs. For he, which in respect of his body is a great way distant from vs, doth not only spread the efficacie of his spirit through the whole world, but also doeth verely dwell in vs. Furthermore, it is to be noted, that this was not spoken to the Apostles onely: for the Lord promisseth his helpe not to that age onely, but vnto the end of the world. Therefore it is as much, as if he should haue sayd, how weake soeuer the ministers of the Gospell be, and haue want of all things, he will be their cheife captaine, that they may become conquerours ouer all the assaults of the worlde. As plaine experience teacheth at this day, that Christ in a secret maner doeth worke wonderfully: so that the Gospell preuaileth against innumerable lets. So much the lesse is the wickednesse of the Popish cleargie to be borne with, while they doe lay this colour vpon their sacrilegious tyranny. They doe say that the Church can not erre which is gouerned by Christ. As if that Christe, no otherwise then as some common souldiour would let out his labour to hire to other captaines: and not rather retaining the authority wholly to himselfe, testifieth that he will be a defender of his doctrine, so as his ministers in him may hope to be conquerours of the whole world.

Mathew.

Marke 16.

Luke 24.

19. So after the Lord had spoken vnto them, hee was receiued into heauen, and sate at the right hande of God.
20. And they went forth and preached euery where, And the Lorde wroughte with them, and confirmed the woord with signes that followed. Amen.

50. Afterward, he led them forth into Bethania, and liſte vpp his handes and blessed them.
51. And it came to passe, that as he blessed them, he departed from them, and was carried vp into heauen.
52. And they worshipped him & returned to Ierusalem with great ioy.
53. And were continually in the temple, prayſinge and lauding GOD. Amen.

19. So

29. So after the Lord . Because that Matthew had royally extolled the kingdom of Christ about all the worlde, he speaketh no word of his ascension into heauen. Marke also maketh no mention of the place and of the maner: both the which are expressed by Luke. For he sayeth that the disciples were led out into Bethania, that from the mount of Oliues, (from whence the Lord hadde come to beare the ignominie of the crosse) hee might ascend into his celestiall throne. And as he would not be seene generally of all menne, when he was restored to life: so hee admitted not all to be witnesses of his resurrection into heauen, because that he would that this mystery of the faith should rather be knowne by the preaching of the Gospell, then to be seene with eyes. It followeth in Luke, that Christ *lifting vp his hands on him, blessed the Apostles*. Whereby he teacheth that the office of blessing, which vnder the law had been committed to the Priests, doeth truly and properly belong to him. When men doe mutually blesse themselves, that is nothing else then to pray for their good: But the reason is farre otherwise with God, who not onely fauoureth the requests, but with his onely becke performeth what soeuer is to be wished for vs. But sith that he is the onely authour of all blessing, yet that his grace might be the more familiar, his will was that the Priests in the beginning, should as mediators blesse in his name. So Melchisedec, Gen. 14. 19. blessed Abraham: and in Numerie 6. 23. there is set downe a perpetuall law for this matter. To the same also appertaineth that which is read in the Psalme, 118. 26. Wee doe blesse you out of the house of the Lord. Furthermore, in the 7. chapter to the Hebrewes, the 7. verse, the Apostle saith that it is a signe of excellency to blesse others. For the lesse (saith he) is blessed of the greater. Now, when Christ (the true Melchisedec and the eternall Priest) came into the light, it was meete that in him should be fulfilled, that which was shadowed by the legall figures, as Paule also teacheth, Ephes. 1. 3. that we are blessed by God the father in him, that we might become rich in all heauenly good things. Therefore hee once blessed the Apostles openly and with a solemne rite, to the ende the faithfull might cary themselves the next way to him, if they desire to be partakers of the grace of God. In the lifting vppe of hands there is an olde ceremony described, which we know the Priests vsed in times past.

32. And they worshipped him. By the woorde *worshippinge*, Luke doeth first declare that the Apostles were put out of doubt, because that the maiesty of Christe appeared then on euery side, so that now there could be no doubt of his resurrection. Furthermore, for the same cause they beganne to worship him with greater reuerence, then when they enioyed his company vpon the earth. For the worshippinge whereof hee speaketh now, is not onely as to a maister or to a Prophet, neither as to one onely halfe knowne to be the Messias, but it was yeilded as to the king of glory and iudge of the worlde. But because that Luke was purposed to extend his hystorie longer, hee onely sayeth briefly what the Apostles should doe for ten dayes. But the sum is, that through the seruency of ioy they brake out openly into the prayses of God, & were dayly in the Temple. Not that they passed the nights and the dayes there, but because they frequented all the assemblies, and were present at the appoynted and solemne houres to yeelde thanks vnto God. Also this diligence is oppos-

sed to the seare, which kept them before shut vp and hidden in the house.

MARK E. 19. *And sate at the right hand of God.* I haue in other places declared, what this speech should meane: that is, Christ is lifted vpon hie, that he may be aboue Angels and all creatures: that the father might gouerne the worlde by his hande: that, to bee shorte, euery knee might bow before him. Therefore it is as much as if hee shoulde bee called Gods vicar, who supplyeth his person. Wherefore it is not conuenient that some certaine place shoulde bee imagined, when as the right hand doth Meraphorically signifie the second power from God. And Marke added this purposely: that wee might know that Christ was not receiued into the heauens, that he might enioy a blessed rest farre from vs, but that he might gouerne the world for the saluation of all the godly.

20. *And they went forth.* Marke doth briefly touch heere those things which Luke doth prosecute hyltorically in the second booke, that the voyce of a small & a base company of men thundred forth euen to the vttermoſt endes of the world. For the more incredible the matter was, the more certainly appeared the myracle of the heavenly power. All men thought that Christ by the death of the crosse was either vterly ouer throwne, or so ouerwhelmed, that there should be no mention of him at any time, but reprochfull & detestible. The Apostles whom he had chosen to be his witnesses, filthily forsaking him, had hidden themselves in the darke: the ignorance & rudenes of them was so great, and also the contempt so great, that they durst scarce speake abroad. Was there any hope of men vnlearned & of no account, yea, & of runnagates, that by the sound of their mouth they should bring to many dispersed vnder the Empire of a man crucified? There is therefore great weight in these words, that they went forth & preached euery where, which euen now for feare durst not speake in their secret corner. For so vnlooked for a conuersion in a moment could not bee done by man. And therefore marke addeth, *The Lord wrought with them*, signifying that this was the very worke of God. Yet this phrase of speech doth not make a partition betweene their worke or labor, & the grace of God, as if that they of themselves could do any thing: but he meaneth simply that they were holpe of god, because that according to the flesh they shoulde haue attempted that in vaine, which is yet wrought by them. I grant that the ministers of the word are called fellow helpers of God, 1. Cor. 3. 9 in as much as he vseth their ministry: but it is to be noted that there is no power in them, but that which he giueth the. Further, they doe preuaile nothing by planting and by watering, except the secret working of the spirit doe cause it to encrease. *Confirmed the word.* Marke here, in my iudgement, doth marke a part of that, which he hadde generally set downe immediatly before. For the Lord wrought with them by other meanes, least the preaching of the Gospell should be in vaine: but this was a notable testimony of his helpe, that he confirmed the same by myracles. And this place teacheth to what end myracles must be referred, that it is not lawfull to draw them after peruerſe corruptions, for that they do serue the Gospell. Whereof it followeth, that the holy order of God is inuerterd, if they be drawne away from the worde of God (whereof they are appurtenances) to the adorning of vngodly doctrines, or are drawne to colour out corrupt worshippings.

L A V S D E O.

